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RIVERSIDE
Then & Now



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RIVERSIDE

Then & Now

A HISTORY
OF
RIVERSIDE, ILLINOIS

ILLUSTRATED WITH PHOTOGRAPHS, MAPS
AND OLD ETCHINGS

COMPILED BY

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I LE PORTAGE <i>by S. S. Fuller</i>	13
II BEFORE SETTLEMENT <i>by S. S. Fuller</i>	22
III THE LAUGHTONS <i>by S. S. Fuller</i>	32
IV SETTLEMENT OF AUX PLAINES (Now Riverside) <i>by Vernetta Snyder Ripley</i>	48
V THIRTY YEARS OF GENESIS <i>by S. S. Fuller</i>	67
VI BIRTH OF A MODEL SUBURB <i>by Mrs. E. O. C. Hoefer</i>	75
VII THE CENTURY CLOSES <i>by Herbert J. Bassman</i>	89
VIII VILLAGE INSTITUTIONS	94
Our Churches	
Riverside Schools	
Riverside Golf Club	
World War Roll of Honor	
Sponsors of This Book	

FOREWORD

The topography and location of the area which Riverside now occupies has played a great part in the history of Cook County and, for that matter, of the whole Northwest Territory. The early history of this region is well recorded in many volumes. It is reviewed in this volume, with a number of amplifications, to again bring to mind what an important part this locality has in early American history because of its being at one end of the old and famous Chicago Portage.

The early settlers in this area were of strong, virile stock and have left their mark, not only here, but wherever their descendants have gone. While some of the descendants and early residents of the Village of Riverside are still with us, much information of historical interest has been gathered for this volume, so that it may be recorded for posterity. We of Riverside have reason to be especially proud of the historic background of our Village. It has affected the history of this entire part of the United States.

Fortunately, at the time this book is compiled, the Forbes family are celebrating this year as the centennial of the coming of their large family to what they called Aux Plaines. The historical data they have collected for this event has been made available to us and has been incorporated in this book by a descendant, Vernetty Snyder Ripley.

Mrs. Ernest Hoefer, our oldest resident to have been born in Riverside, and her sisters, Miss Josephine and Miss Bessie Sherman, have been gathering historical

records and early photographs for a long time; and have made them available to us. Mrs. Hoefer has written a chapter included here, covering the span of her residence in Riverside.

Mr. H. K. Allen, our oldest male resident, who came to Riverside in April, 1871, and Mr. T. C. Blayney, who came here about the same time, have given much valuable information. Mrs. H. K. Havemeyer and Miss Catharine A. Mitchell have loaned their collections of material. Mr. Ralph Sherlock has furnished several plates for illustrations. Mr. Herbert J. Bassman has gathered the pictures and made many photographs; and has also revised the text. Mrs. Winifred Hunt, Mr. William P. Munsell, and others, have corrected copy and helped with the arrangement. Mrs. Mary Cusic has given her time, without extra compensation, in typing the manuscript.

We owe a great deal to Mr. G. Elwood Johnson of the National Park Service, connected with the University of Chicago, for a very comprehensive report about the early history of the Laughton brothers here. This report was prepared especially for our benefit. A copy of this report and bibliography is now preserved in the Riverside Public Library.

Mr. J. C. Miller, a retired engineer, living in Oak Park, Illinois, has supplied maps and other valuable items of historical importance. Much information has been obtained from abstracts and old village records, and through conversation with interested people.

There has necessarily been some haste in the preparation of the manuscript, and some errors have probably crept in. We ask the indulgence of the reader. An earnest effort has been made to record the facts and, at the same time, to give the story in an interesting form. Recorded history, especially relating to the Laughtons,

has been somewhat confusing; and an effort has been made to straighten out conflicting statements. It still remains for some one to determine the exact location of Laughton's Tavern in the earliest pioneer days of this region. On the other hand, the location of the very early home of Stephen Forbes has been authenticated. It may have been the same building that was known as Laughton's Tavern.

We wish, very appreciatively, to thank the sponsors who have made the printing of this book possible. In addition to other assistance Mr. Henry A. Miller has obtained for this book the necessary financial underwriting by obtaining these sponsors, whose names are included herewith.

The compilation of this book has been a labor of love for our Village; and it is hoped that this volume may be the basis of a more extensive history. Much material is being left with the Riverside Public Library for the use of future investigators.

S. S. FULLER.

RIVERSIDE

Then & Now



CHAPTER I

LE PORTAGE

HISTORIANS seeking the ideal area as an example to prove that both Nature and Man contribute to events that shape the destiny of a land or people, could find no better place than Riverside and the Portage district, which includes Lyons. Here we have a great work of Nature rivaling a great work of Man, both exerting to this day their influence toward the development of an exceptional residential community.

Nature started her work eons ago when the ice age was in its decline and the glaciers were receding. In that far off time she shaped the land and created physical conditions that made this area for centuries the most important point in that vast stretch of wilderness known at first as the Northwest Territory. When Man's activities first began to shape the character and future of Riverside is not certain but during the hundred years that have passed since the first white family came to settle here as pioneers there have been countless man-made developments. The most important of these were wrought by the *Riverside Improvement Company* and by that internationally famous architectural landscape firm, *Olmstead, Vaux and Company*, whose dream and development of an ideal suburban community will be dealt with in its chronological place in this narrative.

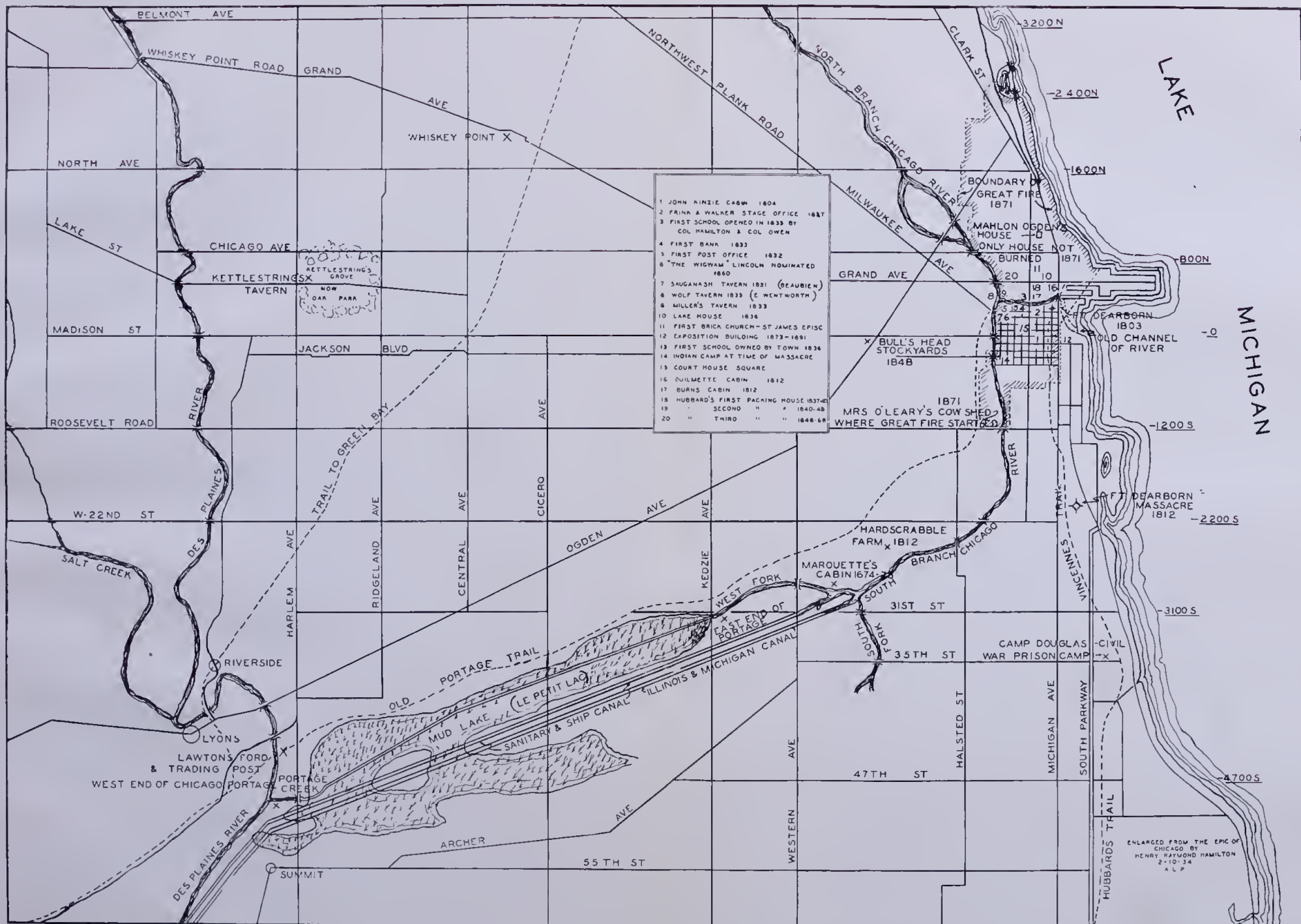
Riverside

At one time, in this vicinity, there was a very large glacial lake, Lake Chicago, which emptied entirely toward the Gulf of Mexico. As time went on, the glaciers cut a way through toward the Gulf of St. Lawrence, leaving a chain of great lakes. A ridge, or continental divide of various width, was left surrounding Lake Michigan. Near Riverside and Lyons the ridge divided the water of the Des Plaines River and the Chicago River, where the ridge was quite narrow.

Nature's phenomena that made this area the most important in the great northwest was a break in this ridge, which allowed the Des Plaines River to empty part of its water, especially at high water time, into Lake Michigan through the west branch of the south branch of the Chicago River. Even during low water periods there remained a slough and shallow channel which came to be known as Mud Lake. There was a creek at about what is now 48th Street and Harlem Avenue which connected the Des Plaines River with Mud Lake. At low water, there was a short land portage at the east end near Kedzie Avenue. This became the important link in the route of travel between the east and the west.

The Indians undoubtedly used the portage for centuries before this country was discovered by white men. They informed the early explorers of its existence. To the explorers it was known as "Le Portage," indicating the importance they gave it.

It is of interest to note how Le Portage, to be known from here on in this book as "the Chicago Portage", was first discovered and used by the early white man. Passion for new wealth went hand in hand with religious



IMPORTANT HISTORIC EVENTS AND PLACES IN CHICAGOLAND LOCATED IN REFERENCE TO RIVERSIDE

Then and Now

zeal. Count Frontenac at Quebec, Governor of New France, commissioned Louis Joliet to accompany Father Jacques Marquette, a missionary, to discover and explore the Mississippi River. Marquette was thirty-six years old when he began his journey at St. Ignace, Mackinaw Strait, May 17, 1673, and proceeded with Joliet and five other men in two birch bark canoes. Their outfit consisted of a bag of cornmeal, a string of dried beef, and a blanket apiece; also beads and crosses for gifts to the Indians. Father Marquette's mission was to carry the cross and his religion to the natives, and Joliet's was to establish trade for the French and enable them to occupy the country. They proceeded by way of Lake Michigan, Green Bay and the Fox-Wisconsin-Lake Winnebago route to the Mississippi, which they entered June 17, 1673. They explored as far south as the mouth of the Arkansas River, which they reached July 17, 1673. The Indians in that region informed them of a shorter route to Lake Michigan by way of the Illinois River. Journeying up the Illinois and the Des Plaines to a place about midway between the site of Summit and Riverside, they came to the little creek that was the outlet of Mud Lake. Here they portaged through Mud Lake and the south branch of the Chicago River to the lake, on their return to Green Bay.

From 1679-1682, La Salle next made three trips to this region from Canada. It was only on the last trip that he recognized the Chicago Portage as the better way to the Illinois River. He first used the portage at the south end of Lake Michigan near South Bend, going up the St. Joseph River and land-portaging over to the Kankakee River. It will be noted that there were three portages: first, that at Green Bay, second, that at the

Riverside

Chicago Portage and, third, that at the St. Joseph River. The Chicago Portage, which was only nine miles long, and, for part of the year entirely water, was by far the most important and constituted the reason for locating Chicago here instead of at the south end of the Lake. LaSalle's survey established for the first time the exact location of the Chicago Portage.

The French and their Indian allies during this period controlled the Chicago Portage and the entire fur trade of the region. Meanwhile, in the east, the English fur traders viewed the situation with envious eyes. Forming an alliance with the Iroquois, who were long-standing enemies of the Illinois Indians, they urged and drove the Iroquois to harass and make war upon the French and their allies, to the end that they might share in the control of the immense fur trade of the great northwest. For twelve years after La Salle's death, Tonty bravely kept his Indian allies together and maintained control of the Chicago Portage, but in 1700 he and his allies were compelled to abandon Fort St. Louis at Starved Rock and the northern Illinois region.

The value of the Chicago Portage as a trade route at no time diminished, however, and numerous attempts were made to wrest control of it from the Indians. The French, in possession of the Green Bay region, were also in force at Fort de Chartres and Cahokia near St. Louis. They had another fort near the present LaFayette, Indiana. One of the last attempts of the French to gain control of this region was in 1730 when there was concerted action from all these forts to fight the Fox Indians, who wandered down from Wisconsin. They trapped and destroyed the greater part of the Indians at

Then and Now

Marameck Hill about two miles south of the present village of Plano, Illinois. They never permanently succeeded, however, in reestablishing themselves in the Mississippi Valley nor in obtaining control of the Chicago Portage. The English gradually acquired control of the fur trade of the Northwest.

Throughout the 18th century conflicts between French and English, between the early settlers and the Indians, and between other groups, evolved out of the desire to gain control of the Portage area. It was one of the principal causes of the military expedition of George Rogers Clark during the Revolutionary War and led to the capture of the British at Vincennes, Indiana. More about this incident and its importance will be related in another chapter of this history.

Following the Revolutionary War, the Chicago Portage was included by implication in the Ordinance of Virginia, passed July 13, 1787, which act preceded our Constitution, and virtually cemented the victorious colonies into a union. This Ordinance created the Northwest Territory previously spoken of. The passage referred to reads as follows:

"The Navigable waters leading into the Mississippi and the St. Lawrence, and the carrying places between the same, shall be common highways, and forever free, as well to the inhabitants of the said territory as to the citizens of the United States and those of any other states that may be admitted into the Confederacy, without any tax, impost, or duty therefor."

The English continued, however, to attempt to gain

Riverside

control of the portages leading to the Mississippi River, and especially of the Chicago Portage, by establishing depots with the intent to shut the American traders out of the valley. Anthony Wayne forestalled all this, realizing the importance of the Portage, by a provision of the Greenville treaty which specified also a cession of "one piece of land six miles square at the mouth of the Chicago River, emptying into the southwest end of Lake Michigan where a post formerly stood," a similar piece at the site of Peoria, and a piece twelve miles square at the mouth of the Illinois River emptying into the Mississippi, and the "free passages of the portages and rivers connecting with these grants." He was thinking of international politics rather than real estate although this was the first recorded real estate transaction made in this region.

The British House of Lords, having moved too slowly to seize the pivotal Chicago Portage, saw the young republic grasp the whole northwest more securely in 1803 when, in the Louisiana Purchase, it acquired an empire from France.

The United States completed Fort Dearborn, near the mouth of the Chicago River, in 1804, for the protection of this Portage and to supplement other forts they had at Detroit and Mackinaw.

Again the Portage played a very important part in the history of this area when, in 1814, President Madison recommended the building of a canal from the Chicago River to the Illinois River. On August 24, 1816, a treaty with the Indians ceded territory ten miles north and ten miles south of the Chicago River, extending to the mouth of the Fox River, for the purpose of building

Then and Now

a canal and military road to accommodate traffic going through the Chicago Portage. The map shows Riverside within this strip.

Almost every event pertinent to this narrative from the time of early exploration of this section of the country until the middle of the 19th century was influenced by the location of the Portage and by its great importance to missionaries, explorers, fur traders, and early settlers; but the Portage did not fully satisfy the transportation needs. There were times when the Portage was almost dry and traffic by canoe was impossible. During those periods travelers had to carry their canoes either through a mucky slough, or overland on a ridge just north of the Portage. In spite of this, the water portage continued to be the most popular route of travel until the fur trade grew to a considerable volume and the pioneer settlers arrived. Then the use of ponies and wagons created the need for developed overland routes. The first of these routes out of the little settlement on the shores of Lake Michigan, and Fort Dearborn, that was built to guard the Portage, was the trail that ran along the high land just north of the water route. It came to be known later as the Southwest Plank Road, and in our day it is famous as Ogden Avenue. It still remains the principal highway out of Chicago connecting Joliet, Plainfield, Naperville, and other communities settled about the same time as Riverside and Lyons.

The Erie Canal was opened in 1825. This had the effect of bringing in agriculturists from the New England states. These, together with settlers coming up from the south, drove the fur trade out of this area and made obsolete the use of the Chicago Portage. Over-

Riverside

land travel became the mode of transportation. The ridge to the north was used for as much as a mile in width where the best road could be found, and fords through the Des Plaines River came into use. North of the Portage and quite close to Laughton's (Lawton) trading post was the ford known as Laughton's. Stoney Ford was a little north of Laughton's Ford and was about 100 feet south of the new Joliet highway crossing. There was another ford just below the present bridge between Lyons and Riverside, which allowed travelers to connect up with the Southwest Plank Road or the Joliet Road on the south and with a road running along what is now Long Common Road. This, at one time, was known as Barry Point Road and ran across the present C. B. & Q. tracks where East Avenue would go if extended.

In 1932 The Riverside Reading Club dedicated a marker locating the site of this ford at a point just off Fairbank Road about 150 yards below the bridge. The spot was definitely located through the assistance of the Chicago Historical Society, and the inscription on the marker reads:

"This boulder marks the old river crossing used by the Indians on the trail from north to south, by the fur traders, and by the early settlers in the development of the west."

The Sanitary District in 1900 built a dike beginning just above the point where Laughton had his trading post and extended southwest to the Summit Ford at Lawndale Avenue. This dike had the effect of shoving the river over and leaving its bed, connecting with Portage Creek and the island to the east, without water. Portage Creek

Then and Now

has been marked with a stone by the Chicago Historical Society. The creek can still be seen, on either side of Harlem Avenue, as one starts up the incline going south in the neighborhood of 48th Street.

Today the Portage exerts no influence on this nor any other community. Its time in history has passed, but the tide of men and nations was affected during the years that this phenomenon of nature played an important role. There would be no Chicago where the great city is today; Riverside might have been in Wisconsin instead of Illinois, as will be explained later; in fact there probably would not have been a Riverside at all, had there been no Portage and no beach line left in this area by the glaciers.



CHAPTER II

BEFORE SETTLEMENT

STANDING on the banks of the Des Plaines River at the Boy Scout cabin on an autumn evening and looking up Salt Creek toward the setting sun, no great imagination is required to discern, in the twilight mists, visions of Indian camp fires, of silently gliding canoes, and other scenes of Indian life that must have been common in this vicinity long before and also long after the first white man set foot in this territory.

The ghosts of Indian days are not difficult to raise in imagination, for twilight visions may well be mingled with the knowledge that, nearby, lie the bones of countless Indian braves and the members of their families. As we stand at the Scout Cabin we know that not far away is an Indian burial ground, also what is reputed to have been a field of Indian corn, and very definitely a camping ground. Hundreds of arrow heads and a few other stone implements have been found in the area that is known today as Indian Gardens.

There is nothing unusual about the fact that Indians once tramped over a piece of land, but Indians did more than tramp over the territory that is now Riverside. Long before the white man came, they recognized the fact that it possessed exceptional features favorable to community life. There were a fast running stream, portages, free

Then and Now

flowing springs, and wooded river banks that fringed a vast prairie and a swamp. In the woods there was one type of game, in the river were fish, and on the prairie and in the swamps more game. Here were both shelter and provision aplently to feed the body, and beauty in abundance to satisfy the soul. The peninsula also gave water protection on three sides.

Most of the Indian tribes that inhabited the Northwest Territory undoubtedly at one time or another camped or passed through what is now Riverside. Only three tribes, the Chippewas, Ottawas, and Potawatamies held title to the land included in present day northeastern Illinois. The Potawatamies were the principal Indians in the neighborhood of Riverside, and, when the first pioneers ventured to settle west of Fort Dearborn, they found a village of about thirty braves and their squaws and families near the ford just north of Portage Creek. Corra-bee-nai was their chief, and the village was made up of members of the three tribes mentioned above.

Indian trails were to be seen in this section as late as 1858. The early settlers had no difficulty identifying them for they bore common characteristics, all of them being narrow and deep and serpentine in their course, and all converging toward the locality in part now included in the Village of Riverside.

That the Indians roamed this country for centuries is certain. What is also certain is that this particular area was more familiar to most Indian tribes in the northwest than any other, for the early explorers were given definite directions how to locate the Portage which was the principal link in the shortest route between the Mississippi River and Lake Michigan. To trace the his-

Riverside

tory of this area through the early period of the white man's coming here until its settlement by the Forbes family in 1836, requires picking up the threads briefly mentioned in the chapter on The Portage and weaving them into the narrative of how this area was saved for the States, and how it finally became a community in Illinois instead of Wisconsin or a part of Canada.

Originally the Spanish were in nominal possession of this land through discovery in Florida. When the English colonists arrived, they settled along the Atlantic coast. The French extended their settlements along the St. Lawrence River ever westward into the Great Lakes region. Through water routes, the Mississippi Valley finally became more accessible to the French than to the English.

As related in the preceding chapter, the first record of the existence of the Portage is an entry in the journal of Father Marquette in the summer of 1673 who, after entering the Mississippi River through the Green Bay-Fox-Wisconsin route, learned that there was a shorter way back to Lake Michigan. According to historical records, that is the first time white men set foot on soil in the Portage district. Those who are romantically minded may stretch the white man's entry into this territory back another 33 years to 1640 and Jean Nicolet, which would make the 300th anniversary of the first white man's coming almost coincide with the 100th anniversary of Riverside's settlement. But Nicolet left no document to show that he was here.

When Father Marquette and Louis Joliet arrived at The Portage in the fall of 1673, Joliet proceeded on his way back to Quebec to report on their discoveries. Mar-

Then and Now

quette did not accompany Joliet as he had promised to return to the Indians on the Illinois River. However, as he was in poor health, he remained at Green Bay until October, 1674. He wintered on the south branch of the Chicago River from December to March 30, 1675, near what was later called "Hardscrabble" at about Archer and Racine Avenues. Not being well enough to go to the Illinois country he proceeded around Lake Michigan, where he died near Ludington, Michigan, in May on his way to Ft. Mackinac.

During the one hundred years that followed Father Marquette's discoveries, the more adventurous pioneers established a fur trade that became a big commercial enterprise and a chief source of revenue for the French in Canada. As previously stated, The Portage was important in this fur trade business and to command it was the ambition of all groups interested in controlling the fur trade.

The battle on the Plains of Abraham at Quebec in 1759 between the English and French was one of the most crucial battles affecting this region, when Wolf for the English defeated Montcalm. From this time on, until the treaty of 1763, the French lost all their possessions on this continent east of the Mississippi and, of course, their interest in the Northwest fur trade. About two-thirds of the French settlers, however, continued to live in the region and French names are given to many geographical divisions.

For about fifteen years thereafter, the English practically controlled the fur trade emanating from the Chicago region.

During the Revolutionary War this region was

Riverside

saved to the colonies by George Rogers Clark, the twenty-six year old frontiersman, who thought the time opportune for driving the English from this Illinois country. It is to be remembered that this Northwest territory, comprising what is now Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin, was claimed by Virginia by special grant of the crown. Some small strips of this territory were also claimed by Massachusetts and Connecticut by subsequent grants. With the backing of Patrick Henry, Governor of Virginia, Clark was provided with men and supplies; and after many surprises and hardships in the Illinois country, he captured the British forces at Vincennes, Indiana, and thus he became the outstanding figure of his day as affecting this country. He has been recently honored by a memorial at Vincennes. When the Treaty of Paris which closed the Revolution was made the boundaries of the American colonies were extended to the Mississippi River and hence the Illinois lands became American by right and treaty.

The British, however, showed no inclination to give up the northwest and finally refused to surrender this territory. Their real reason was the desire to keep the great fur trade and retain control of the Indians of the region. Although the Treaty of Paris gave the United States sovereignty over the region, it remained for our government to extinguish the Indians' title to the land before opening it for settlement by the white man. The Indians, through the encouragement of the British, resisted all attempts to settle the territory north of the Ohio, and finally attacked a party of settlers on the Ohio River. General Anthony Wayne drove the Indians northward, routing them from their strongholds in the neighborhood of Fort Recovery and Fort Defiance, and decisively

Then and Now

defeating them August 20, 1794, at the Battle of Fallen Timbers, on the Maumee River near Toledo. The Treaty of Greenville was not concluded, however, until August 10, 1795. During the time of making this treaty, the Englishmen were still trying to gain control of the portages leading to the Mississippi, and especially of the Chicago Portage, by establishing depots with the intent to shut the American traders out of the valley.

History, for this region, was made rapidly in the early years of the nineteenth century. Dramatic forces were at work. Tecumseh, the Shawnee, dreamer of temperance and communism, was striving for the confederacy of the American Indians and attempting to combat the aggressions of the Whites for their lands. The Wyandots had sold vast sections of the Ohio to the Whites in 1805, the Miamis had ceded two million acres to Harrison, the Pian-Keswaws had given up cheaply the territory west of the Wabash River. "Such transactions must stop", said the Red Orator. Tecumseh brought his plan of Indian communism to William Henry Harrison, Governor of the territory at Vincennes in 1810.

Great Britain and the Americans were each attempting to make allies of the Indians. The British, or rather the love-making Canadians, were especially active in this direction. Tecumseh's dwindling confederacy sympathized with the British, but he held them in check. While he was away at one time, his half-crazed brother loosed the warriors on Harrison's Army at Tippecanoe, but they met defeat November 6, 1811. This battle saved Fort Dearborn, as Tecumseh had planned to raze it. He had been among the Potawatamies and Winnebagos of northern Illinois, preparing them for the uprising. The Fort was not safe for long, however; some of Tecumseh's

Riverside

allies, the Winnebagos, in April massacred two men at Lee's farm, near where Marquette wintered years before. By June the war of 1812 was on. Evidently, the Indians had known about this war before those in the post did, as the friendly Potawatamies began to show signs of restlessness. Pretending friendliness, they massacred most of the occupants as they were withdrawing to Fort Wayne, Indiana. The John Kinzie family was saved because of their particular friendliness to the Potawatamies.

After this, the region reverted to the Indians for a period of four years. Then Fort Dearborn was rebuilt. One hundred and twelve soldiers under Captain Bradley arrived July 4, 1816. John Kinzie returned in the autumn. The place took on new life.

In 1812, Illinois was made a separate territory. The northern boundary was made on a line about even with the south end of Lake Michigan. This left the present Riverside region within the territory of Wisconsin.

Different fur companies were formed to handle the trade of this region, as the different nations had possession. After 1763 there was the Hudson Bay Company. In 1783, the Northwest Fur Company was organized at Quebec. Later, the Mackinac Company became a successful contestant for the fur trade.

In 1809, John Jacob Astor organized the American Fur Company. He got a law passed by Congress in 1815 which prohibited foreigners from dealing in furs in the United States and territories. His competitors were put out of business and he laid the foundation of his fortune with pelts which went largely through the Chicago Portage. The "engages" or local carriers were simply tire-

Then and Now

less and extraordinary in their endurance and activity. Jean Baptiste Beaubien and Gurdon S. Hubbard were two representatives of this company who came here in 1818. Hubbard was sixteen years old when he came to the Kinzie home where Mrs. Kinzie received him as a son. He tells of his experience in going through Mud Lake, of walking along beside the boat to help push it through, and of the hordes of leaches and mosquitoes he encountered. Beaubien was later to be connected with Riverside history when he was elected a colonel of the Illinois militia at Stephen Forbes' house at Riverside in 1834. A son of Hubbard, Gurdon S. Hubbard, Jr., became a resident of Riverside in the 1870's.

While Chicago and northern Illinois were still virgin wilderness the southern part of the state was filling rapidly with settlers from Virginia, North Carolina and Kentucky. They took up homesteads in lower Illinois and their trade, like their loyalties, ran southward.

The northern boundary of Illinois might have remained as it was but for the political shrewdness, perhaps statesmanship, of Nathaniel Pope, representative in Congress for the territory of Illinois. Although Pope was a southerner up from Kentucky, like many others of this section of which President Lincoln was later an outstanding example, he was pro-union in the sectional lines that were being drawn, even then, between states that permitted slavery and those that forbade it.

Since the formation of the republic, North and South had striven for supremacy, and at the last had agreed to strike a balance of power by admitting new states to the union in pairs, one "slave" state for every "free" state.

Riverside

Thus Illinois, which begged for statehood in 1818, was credited to the anti-slavery forces and paired off against Mississippi which would be pro-slavery. But Nathaniel Pope well knew that in case of division between North and South the state of Illinois, as things then stood, would side with the slave section. This was serious, for, although the nation had not yet begun to rock with the bitter quarrels which were to end in the awful bloodletting of the '60's, thoughtful men in 1818 were seeing the danger of disunion on the horizon. It was on this fear that Pope played when he persuaded President Monroe and Congress to include the Chicago Portage at one end of the proposed canal commanding the Great Lakes, while at the other extreme, deep down in the south, there would be Cairo watching over the junction of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. Illinois would be in a position to crush secession North or secession South. Pope's arguments told. Illinois' boundary was moved up some sixty miles into Wisconsin territory and a new state came into the union with a small village tied to it for the sake of future profits and for the union which must be preserved. Illinois, in the Civil War, swung weight against southern secession such as no other state could show.

Had the Des Plaines River been navigable there might easily have been another St. Paul where now are Lyons and Riverside. When Illinois was admitted as a state, Riverside was unknown and unthought of. Its location fell within the district known as the military tract and was reserved by the Government for the purposes of satisfying the bounties of land promised to the soldiers, 160 acres each, by an act of December 24, 1811,

Then and Now

and January 11, 1812. The surveys were delayed by Indian hostilities but were under way in 1815.

In 1818, Illinois had 15 counties and this region was then in Crawford County. Cook County was not formed until 1831 and included the present counties of Lake, McHenry, Du Page, Cook and Iroquois. It was named after Daniel P. Cook, a protege and son-in-law of Ninian Edwards, the first governor of Illinois. Cook died in 1827.

CHAPTER III

THE LAUGHTONS

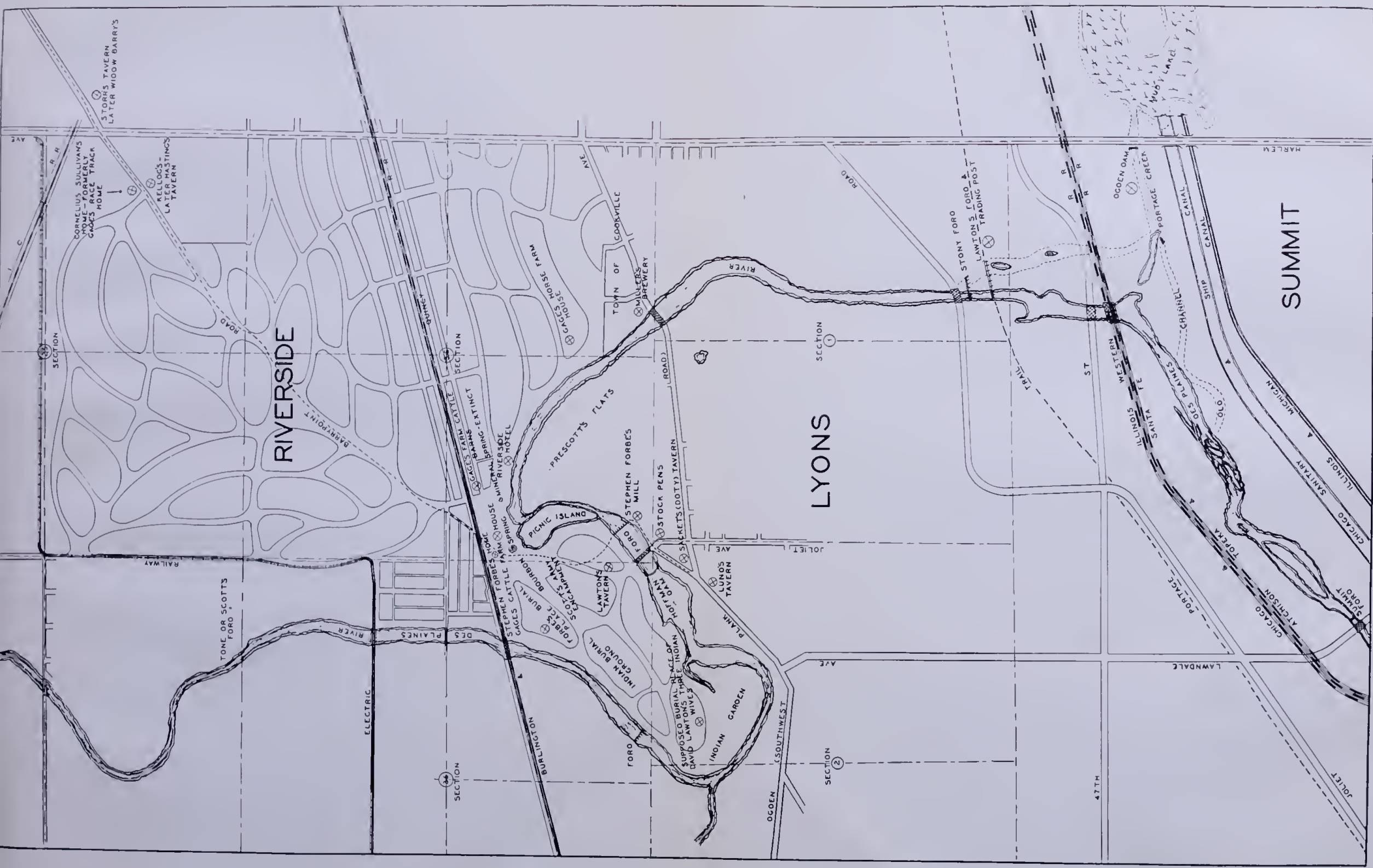
ALTHOUGH most settlements in this part of the state were not made until 1836, which was the year after the removal of the Indians, mostly to Indian Territory or what is now Oklahoma, Riverside and Lyons rightfully could have held the 100th anniversary of their settlement in 1928.

In 1828 the Laughton brothers, David and Bernardus (Barney),* came here to establish what might be termed an outpost of civilization, and that was described by one of the pioneer travelers as a most remarkable home in the wilderness.

The Laughtons had lived at "Hardscrabble" on the South Branch of the Chicago River, the same place where Father Marquette spent a winter 155 years before. More intrepid than their fellow pioneers and undoubtedly more enterprising, the Laughtons recognized the possibilities in a trading post located near the Chicago Portage and also close to the rapidly developing overland trail, "the Brush Hill (Fullersburg) Road," later the Southwest Plank Road that a following generation renamed Ogden Avenue.

Gurdon S. Hubbard and other fur traders were using the land trail more than the water routes. The

*Bernardus Laughton had a trading post at Grand Detour on Rocky River, Michigan, in 1825.



EARLY RIVERSIDE AND VICINITY SHOWING TRAILS AND HOMESTEADS

Then and Now

Erie Canal was opened in 1825 and agriculturists were coming from the New England states. During the travel season, covered wagons and every sort of conveyance then available were familiar sights on that broad trail, some places a mile wide, that led from Fort Dearborn westward to the fertile prairies.

The reader will remember that there were three important fords in the Des Plaines River in this vicinity. One of these was located a short distance north of Portage Creek. The Laughtons built their trading post just east of this ford which was directly in line with the geologically known Tolleston Sand Beach at approximately what is now 43rd Street. Post and Paul, surveyors, definitely place the trading post north and east of what was later called Prescott Island in the southeast quarter of Section 1, township 38, North, 12 East, a little to the west of the center of this quarter section. There is still to be seen a depression in the ground at the site of the trading post. As this is being written, the Cook County Board of Forest Preserve Commissioners has consented to erect an appropriate marker on this historic spot and dedicate it during the week of Riverside's Centennial Celebration, October 4 to 10, 1936.

Historians of Chicagoland, even those who had opportunity to discuss early events with pioneer settlers, have left a confusion of contradictory statements regarding the location of Laughton's "Tavern." The site is located confusedly as near The Portage and then again as in Riverside. Not until this history was compiled were the fragments and documentary evidence sifted down to the final settlement of this important question.

We now are certain the Laughton's "Trading Post"

Riverside

was near The Portage, as already related, but Laughton's "Tavern" was probably on land that is now in Riverside. To be specific, David Laughton purchased from the State of Illinois the S. E. 1-4 of section 35, township 39 R. 12 E., on September 29, 1830. This was an Illinois-Michigan canal section turned over to the State by the United States Government. He received a patent grant January 29, 1833. Most of the First Division of Riverside is in this 1-4 section. The south section line is 39th Street, and the east line is an extension of Kimbark Road south. It is said by some that Laughton's Tavern was on this land near what is now Millbridge Road close to its confluence with South Longcommon Road. The latter, in early times, was Barry Point Road and, if the Tavern site was as above located, it stood a short distance west of one of the principal roads of that time, and only a short distance from the river bank. Albert Scharf came to the conclusion that this was the site of the Tavern and he so expressed himself in conversation with Miss Catharine Mitchell of Riverside. Mr. Charles Sherman also expressed this as his belief to his children, three of whom are now Riverside residents.

In the time of the Laughton's, Barry Point Road had become as important a route of travel as what was later called the Southwest Plank Road, and with it the Indian Ford in Riverside, mentioned in a previous chapter, was used considerably. The Laughton's probably recognized this vantage point as a likely one for a Tavern. Barry Point Road followed along the Calumet Beach of earlier Lake Chicago.

David Laughton is said to have had three Indian wives whom he buried on Lot 15, Block I, along Fairbanks Road. There is a mound on this lot which appears

Then and Now

to be man-made. A tree located on the mound, has been recently cut down which is at least 65 years old. When David Laughton died suddenly, April 12, 1834, he had no descendant heirs and left a nuncupative will in favor of an infant son of Barney Laughton's, David Henry Laughton, bequeathing to him this 1-4 section of land. David's brother Barney had died about one week before. The Probate Court did not recognize this, however, but did recognize a previously written will in favor of Jacob Harsen.

Wherever the tavern was, it was owned by B. Laughton. Mrs. Juliette Kinzie, in her book "*Waubun*," definitely makes that clear. On her way from Fort Winnebago to Fort Dearborn in March 1831, she, in company with her husband, stopped at the tavern. She states:

"It was almost dark when we reached Lawton's. The Aux Plaines was frozen, and the house was on the other side. By loud shouting, we brought out a man from the building, and he succeeded in cutting the ice and bringing a canoe over to us, but not until it had become difficult to distinguish objects in the darkness."

"A very comfortable house was Lawton's, after we did reach it—carpeted, and with a warm stove—in fact, quite in civilized style. Mr. Weeks,* the man who brought us across, was the major-domo during the temporary absence of Mr. Lawton. Mrs. Lawton was a young woman, and not ill-looking. She had complained of the loneliness of her condition and having been brought out there into the woods; which was a thing she had not expected when she came from the east".

*Cole Weeks (Weicks) was licensed to trade Oct. 23, 1824, for one year at Rocky River, Mich. He must have been the Frenchman Mrs. Kinzie refers to in her return trip to the tavern.

Riverside

Mrs. Kinzie tried to comfort Mrs. Lawton with the assurance that things would be better in a few years. Mrs. Lawton said:

"I do not mean to wait for that. I shall go back to my family in the east if Mr. Lawton does not write some of my young friends, to come out and stay with me and make it agreeable."

Mrs. Lawton must have kept her word as a few months later, when Mrs. Kinzie stopped on her way back to Winnebago, Mrs. Kinzie found only "a Frenchman and a small number of Indians".

The Kinzie party had been directed at Dixon to take the Sauk trail which led through Michigan to Mackinac. It is supposed that travel for Chicago was through Riverside at that time, leaving the Sauk trail at Aurora. In 1831, when Cook County was formed, the County established two county roads; one was by way of State Street and Archer Avenue, Chicago, the nearest and best way to the house of Widow Brown. This is now Archer Avenue. The other road was to be located "from the town of Chicago to the house of B. Lawton, from thence to the house of James Walker on the Du Page River and so on to the west limit of the County". James Walker came up from the south in 1828. This road was called the Brush Hill Road as referred to previously. It most likely reached the river somewhere near or north of where Ogden Avenue does now and then travelers came along the Des Plaines River around the bend where the library is now and then across the river at what is now known as the Riverside Ford. This bank was high. The west bank at Ogden Avenue was low and swampy. Mr. George Hofmann Jr. of Lyons remembers an island at this point south of Ogden on which a family lived, using boats to

Then and Now

reach their neighbors. This fact would help to locate a tavern near the bend of the river close to the ford in present Riverside which would also catch the travelers coming from the northeast on Green Bay Road. This is now Long Common Road.

"Laughton (Barney), as an Indian trader, dealt mostly with the Potawatami and it behooved him to locate on a highway of Indian travel and so he established himself at the point where an important Potawatami trail from the southwest crossed the Des Plaines River. His location was twelve miles from Chicago on the site of the modern Riverside," writes G. Elwood Johnson, who has completed an interesting study of the Laughton Trading Post and the Laughton Tavern. A transcript of his manuscript was given to the committee compiling this book and has assisted greatly in settling the dispute about the location of those two historic places.

Andreas states that there was a Laughton tavern in Riverside by 1831 :

"After the family (Scott) had lived at Gros Point (Evanston) five years, it was discovered that Mr. Scott's (Stephen J. Scott) claim was on a reservation granted by the Government to Antoine Ouilmette; and he had removed to Des Plaines and took charge of a tavern owned by the Laughton brothers, which is now the site of Riverside. This tavern was quite pretentious for the times, and a favorite resort of the Chicago people. Scott probably came late in 1831 after Mrs. Kinzie's second visit and stayed as long as the election of 1834. Different ones speak of his having charge at that time."

An old gazetteer of 1834 described the site of Laughton's old trading house as Lyons :

Riverside

"Lyons is a town site on the Des Plaines at Laughton's old trading house, twelve miles west of Chicago. It has a saw mill, three houses, and a tavern."

In another chapter the Forbes family will be treated in detail but this is the place to show a connection between the Laughtons and Mr. Forbes.

Stephan Van Rensselear Forbes and his wife, Elvira Bates Forbes, are said to have come out to B. Laughton's during the year 1831 and squatted on the S. W. 1-4 of section 36, which is just east of that purchased by David Laughton. This was a government section. There was no government land office established in Chicago until 1835. He made payment on this and other land during May and June 1835. This 1-4 section cost \$200. Patents were not obtained until October 1, 1839. This shows the procedure of land purchase to be much slower with the government than that with the state. There is no record of B. Laughton's having bought land. He must record of B. Laughton having bought land. He must have built on D. Laughton's land, probably in partner-

To keep this chronicle in a chronological order as far as possible, and to show the correlation of contemporary events in the early 1830's it is necessary to again pick up the history of the Indians in the midwest.

The Indians were being gradually driven from Illinois. By the treaty of St. Louis (1804), the Sauks (Sacs) and Foxes conveyed to the United States all their land in Illinois. Blackhawk, a subordinate chief under Keokuk, repudiated the treaty. On July 15, 1830, Keokuk made another treaty conveying all their lands east of the Mississippi. The Indians were bound to vacate their land and cross the river in 1831. Keokuk kept his bargain. Blackhawk determined to maintain his



Then and Now

old Rock River home by force. While he and his tribe were away on their annual hunt, white speculators seized his village and corn lands. He tried to rally the Potawatami, Ottawa and Chippewas to a confederation but only the restless Sauks and Foxes followed him. Governor Reynolds and General Clarke were appealed to by the whites. Those around Chicago were alarmed. The Potawatami Indians were kept from the alliance by Saubena, a friendly chief, and Robinson and Caldwell, half-breed chieftains. Saubena, a large Indian, rode to death several horses going to give the alarm to the scattered settlers. This was a real Paul Revere ride.

Bernardus Laughton performed a notable service by warning the settlers. On the morning of May 18, 1832, settlers at Hollenbeck's Grove, now Millbrook, Kendall County, received information that Black Hawk's Indians were within ten miles of that settlement. Most of the families started for Chicago, some of the men remaining to guard the hamlet and crops from destruction. On May 19, 1832, Laughton came to the settlement with three Potawatami Indians and a half-breed named Burrasaw. Laughton's group was joined by Captain Naper and a few other settlers who went to the camp of the Potawatamies seeking information concerning Black Hawk and his warriors. Upon reaching the camp, Naper and party returned almost immediately. Laughton remained having no fear of the Indians. Later Laughton secured the desired information and warned the settlers in the vicinity to leave immediately for Chicago as a band of Sauks had already crossed the Fox River. Within three days, May 21, 1832, the Chicago Militia Company, known as Captain Brown's, left Fort Dearborn to fight Black Hawk. They camped the first night at Laughton's

Riverside

and on the next day reached Naper's settlement.

The U. S. Government reinforced the state troops by sending an army under General Winfield Scott. They arrived by steamer in Chicago, July 10, 1832. Cholera among the troops depopulated Chicago in a hurry. The people fled to Gros Point (Evanston) to Long John Wentworth's, Summit, to Laughtons, and other places of refuge. After ten days General Scott moved his soldiers, such as were able, to the present site of Riverside, where they remained ten days, their health improving meantime. They camped in the neighborhood of Scottswood Common which was later named for General Scott. General Scott himself with twelve men and two baggage wagons after two days took the Naperville road toward Dixon. At the end of ten days camping, the remainder under Colonel Cummings went up along the DesPlaines River to about the present Lake Street and thence on toward what is now Elgin and then to their destination. It is easy to reason why they should come to Riverside. The Chicago area was low and swampy; the general road of travel, even to Galena, then was through Riverside. The sand ridge with its pleasant surroundings of stream and timber at Riverside was the first high spot to the west. Here was to be found also a beautiful spring later to be known as Bourbon Spring.

General Scott's army arrived too late to take part in the war, but the soldiers on their return home to the east advertised the fertile soil of northern Illinois and emigration started through Chicago, using largely the route through Riverside.

The Chippewas, and Potawatamies still held title to the land of northeastern Illinois and southern Wisconsin, besides large tracts not very definitely defined in Indiana

Then and Now

and Michigan. This retarded the settlement of this part of the state as well as other lands ceded by other tribes lying west and northwest. It was necessary in order to open up these lands, that the Indian title to this vast tract of land lying around Lake Michigan be extinguished. These three tribes had, by treaty at Prairie du Chien, July 29, 1829, ceded all their lands in the northwest part of Illinois.

In September, 1833, a grand council was held with the chiefs at Chicago; a treaty was signed September 26, 1833. They gave up five million acres in Illinois and Michigan for which they received whiskey, money and goods—a piteable amount, subject to further reservations. They were robbed and certain white families grew fat in this last “steal.” It remained for two more years to get the Indians finally across the Mississippi. There were about five thousand in all and their last stand was southwest of La Grange near the Vial farm on Plainfield Road. This included about 800 Potawatamies living at or near Riverside. That the Indians did not entirely vacate this area is proven by an incident related by Flavilla Forbes, a young member of the Forbes family, to her descendents. This incident will be told about in another chapter.

We now arrive at a most interesting event in the history of Riverside, an event that is also interesting and important in the history of Cook County. Several paragraphs back, reference was made to Cook County’s first highway, the destination of which out of Chicago was the Laughton Tavern. We now come to another “first” that is connected with Riverside. There are several other “firsts” that will be discussed in their proper place.

Under a general law regulating the militia of the

Riverside

State passed in 1829, a special act was passed by the Legislature in 1833 organizing the militia in Cook County. A part of this act is as follows

“Be it enacted by the people of the State of Illinois represented in general assembly, that all the citizens of Cook County liable to perform military duty, shall organize themselves into a regiment, two battalions, and not less than four nor more than eight companies. After the election of colonel, which shall be held on the 20th day of March next, at the house of David Lorton, on the Des Plaines River, in said county, etc.”

Andeas' History of Chicago states as follows :

“The organization under the provisions of the foregoing law was not completed until more than a year after its passage.”

In the spring of 1834, by order of the Military Commandant of the state, an election was held at the house of David Lorton (Laughton) on June 7. Others speak of the election having been held at the house of Bernardus Laughton. As a matter of fact, at the time of the election, both Laughton brothers were dead. Barney died about one week before his brother David in April, 1834, and the notices of the time state the place of the election as at the house of Stephen Forbes. The official militia order appearing in the *Chicago Democrat* is as follows :

“By order of Josiah Stillman, Brigadier General 2nd Brigade and 5th Division of Illinois Militia, I am requested and commanded to give notice to all the free white male citizens of Cook County, Illinois, over the age of 18 years and under the age of 45 years, that an election will be held at my house, on the western bank of the Des Plaines River, on the

Then and Now

first Saturday in June next, at 12 M. for the purpose of electing a colonel to organize and command the militia of said county.

May 10, 1834

S. Forbes.

Sh'ff Cook County, Ill."

The *Chicago Democrat* later stated that the election was held at the house of Stephen Forbes on the western bank of the Des Plaines River.

Now the conjecture is whether the Laughton tavern and the Forbes house were one and the same. The election could have been held at the Forbes house and the celebration to be described later could have been held at a not distant tavern. Flavilla Forbes Snow Bliss has definitely located the Forbes house as west and near the present railroad depot. If this was the tavern, it would have been very difficult for the Kinzie party to shout loud enough from across the river at the ford to draw the attention of Mr. Weeks. It is more likely that the tavern was farther south toward the next bend in the river. The Forbes house is said to have been torn down in 1858. Just when the tavern was built and what became of it is not exactly known.

This county militia law was by no means popular. The day appointed for the election brought such a crowd of citizens as had never before been assembled in Cook County. All the able-bodied citizens of Chicago attended and they went prepared for a short and decisive campaign. In addition to ordinary commissary stores, a large supply of strong beverages was taken along to strengthen the soldiery. A part of the output was, according to one aged chronicle, "one keg of brandy, four packages of loaf sugar, and sixteen dozen lemons." The

Riverside

election was all one-sided; the successful candidate for colonel was the chivalrous, good-natured, Jean Baptiste Beaubien, then the most popular man in Cook County, and one whom it was believed could be depended upon for lax discipline and light fines in time of peace. The election was celebrated with all the hilarity that the occasion demanded. A barrel set in a spring which gushed from the bluff near Laughton's house was utilized as a punch bowl. Into it, the brandy and lemons and sugar were poured, and from it the crowd drank to the colonel elect, until the spring water again asserted its supremacy. The story is apocryphal; but it is here repeated, nevertheless, as one version of an o'er true tale. It is certain that on the occasion a large majority of the citizens of Chicago and the county got more gloriously tipsy than at any other epoch in their history, before or since. This regiment for a quarter of a century afterward was known as the "Sixtieth Regiment of Illinois Militia."

One thing to be particularly noted about this election was that, while there were three precincts in the large county, Chicago, Widow Brown's and David Walker's, Stephen Forbes' house was selected for this particular election as the more central point for the majority of those of military age at that time.

Nelson R. Norton wrote to Wentworth as follows concerning the election of Beaubien:

"I came to Chicago November 16, 1833—I moved from Chicago in the spring of 1839. The militia of Cook County was organized in 1834 by the election of John B. Beaubien as Colonel, at the tavern owned by Barney H. Lawton, near Lyons, on the Des Plaines (now Riverside, then kept by Stephen J. Scott)."

Then and Now

Other interesting data is to be noted about the Laughton tavern. Andreas, *History of Cook County* 1884, Page 138-139, states "The following letter written by Enoch Chase from Milwaukee dated August 1883, is of historic value, showing as it does, something of the geography of the surrounding town (Chicago) itself from 1834-1836.

"October, 1834—I had occasion to go west as far as the crossing of the Des Plaines River. Between Stiles' log tavern on the west side of the south branch and the *tavern at the crossing of the Des Plaines River*, there was not a vestige of civilization except the wagon tracks and it was the dreariest road I have ever traveled. The prairie mud of the North Branch was drier."

The first stage-coach route from Chicago to Saint Louis ran by way of Laughton's tavern in Riverside. On January 1, 1834, the first stage started from Chicago. Quaife asserts that the proprietor of the new line was John L. Temple; yet the advertisement of the new line appearing in the Chicago Democrat, February 18, 1834, states:

"The New Lines of splendid Four Horse Post Coaches in Illinois from Ottawa by way of Holderman's Grove, Walker's Grove and Laughton's to Chicago, once a week, 80 miles, through in one and one half days; fare \$5.00 (J. D.) Winters, Mills and Co."

The honor of driving the first coach from Chicago past Laughton's tavern was given a young attorney, John D. Caton, later and long-famous as the Chief Justice of the Illinois Supreme Court. The coach was an "elegant, thorough-brace post carriage," which had been received from Boston before the close of Lake Michigan. Charles Fenno Hofmann attempted the new stage line in his

Riverside

journey to Saint Louis and left in a "handsome four horse coach; but the abundant snow forced the abandonment of the coach at Lawton's tavern, the first stage station. Hofmann persuaded the driver to substitute a sled for the coach. The sled was filled with hay and the plentiful use of buffalo robes assured the travelers a comfortable journey."

This brings events in Riverside up to that important time in 1836 when the Forbes family came here to establish their home on the banks of the Des Plaines River. Before going into that chapter a brief mention should be made of the various names by which the present Des Plaines River was known. The French explorers termed it "Riviers Aux Plaines." Some of the early settlers wrote it "Aux Plaines," and others, perhaps because of the French pronunciation wrote it "O'Plaine." During the middle of the 19th century it was Des Plaines, and now combined into one word it is Desplaines.

Just a glimpse of pioneer life in that year when the Forbes family settled in Riverside is given us in brief items selected from Chicago periodicals of that time and other pioneer documents. The roads were almost impassable a large part of the year. The traveler floundered through marshes, seeing flocks of wild duck and geese that settled down in the swamps where Berwyn now stands. It is likely that most of the travel in those early days was by way of Madison Street to near Ogden, then winding southwest toward 12th Street and Central Avenue, thence toward the sand ridge on 22nd Street striking the Green Bay Road near where Widow Barry had a tavern east of Oak Park Avenue, then on the Barry Point Road to Riverside. The area around Riverside was covered with dense woods, a fine grown forest of oak, ash,

Then and Now

linden, hickory and black walnut. On the banks of the river to the north, were white oaks, some two feet in diameter. There were wolves and deer and all kinds of game to be found in the woods. This must have been a very beautiful place to come to.

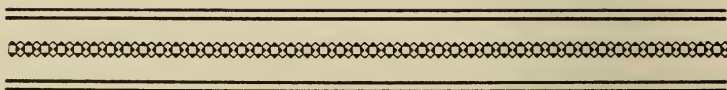
The Green Bay Road was surveyed in 1833. It was only a blazed road as late as 1836.

Mail was brought to Chicago once a week by wagon in 1835; before that, on horseback. June 11, 1836, the post-office in Chicago advertised as follows: "For southwest route by way of Ottawa. Arrives Mondays and Thursdays at 6 P. M., departs Tuesday and Saturdays at 4 A. M."

It took 20 to 30 days to get goods from New York to Chicago. The average cost was \$1.50 per 100 pounds.

Prices current in 1836 for food were as follows: Flour \$12 per bbl; pork \$25 per bbl, and scarce; hogs 10 to 12 1-2c; butter good eastern 38c to 50c very scarce; beef fresh sold by butchers 8c per lb; corn meal none in market; potatoes, 50c to 75c per bu.

The County Commissioners, in issuing a license to the Laughtons, enumerated prices current at that time: Lodging 1 person 12 1-2c, horse 5 cents, early breakfast and supper 25c, dinner 37c, horse fed 25c, cider or beer, one pint 6 1-4c, half pint with rum or brandy 25c.



CHAPTER IV

THE SETTLEMENT OF AUX PLAINES—NOW RIVERSIDE

ONE hundred years ago in the spring of 1836, the family of John and Anne Sawyer Forbes left Preble, New York State, to live on the Aux Plaines River* in Illinois.

Coming west with John and Anne Forbes were their children, Isaac Sawyer and Agnes Van Hoesen Forbes, and their grandchildren, Flavilla Anne, Francis, Mary, and Henry Forbes. There were Harvey and Adeline Burdick Forbes, a bride and groom, twenty-one and eighteen years of age; Hezekiah and Amanda Forbes Bliss with their children, Forbes, Mary and Alphonzo Bliss; Joseph and Elizabeth Forbes Salisbury, with their children, Henry, Flavius, and Admetus Salisbury. There were also Frederick and Mary Anne Forbes Winslow.

This is the roster of those who settled Aux Plaines in the spring of 1836. They were a family of twenty-two people, ten of whom were children under twelve years of age. It was a family to whom Chicago, the prairies, and the beauty of the woods on the Aux Plaines River, had beckoned for many years.

*Aux Plaines was the original French name given to the present Des Plaines River. The early settlers wrote it as it was pronounced.



Stephen Forbes
1821

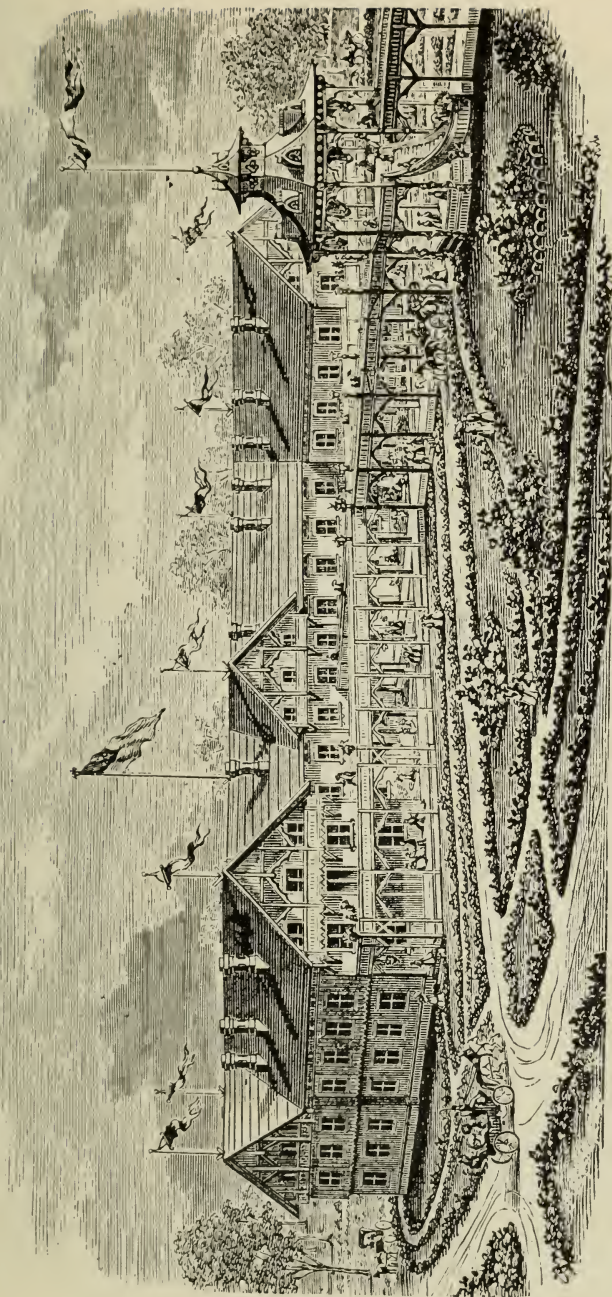
STEPHEN VAN RENSSELAER FORBES, (1797-1879), COOK COUNTY'S FIRST SHERIFF AND CHICAGO'S FIRST SCHOOL TEACHER, CAME TO THIS VICINITY AND PRE-EMPTED 160 ACRES IN 1831. HE WAS A SON OF THE JOHN AND ANNE FORBES WHO CAME TO SETTLE AUX PLAINES IN 1836.



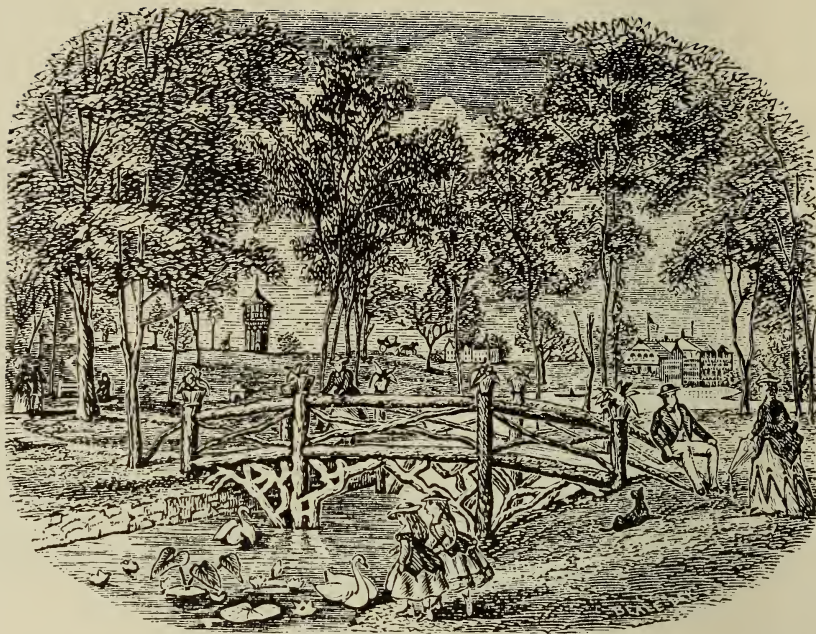
FLAVILLA ANNE FORBES SNOW BLISS (1824-1911) CAME TO RIVERSIDE WITH HER GRANDPARENTS, IN 1836. SHE WAS RIVERSIDE'S FIRST SCHOOL TEACHER.



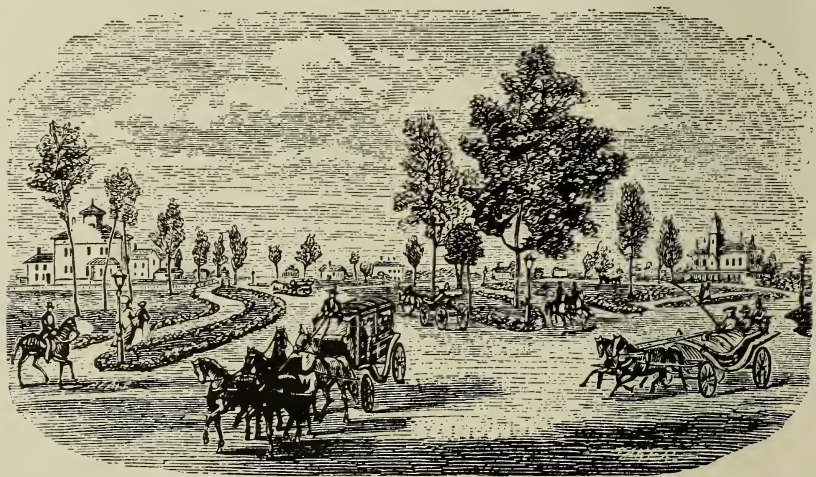
ELVIRA BATES FORBES (1806-1883), THE WIFE OF STEPHEN FORBES, WAS A SISTER TO SOPHIA, THE WIFE OF BARNEY LAUGHTON. WITH HER HUSBAND SHE CAME TO THE SITE OF RIVERSIDE IN 1833 TO PROVIDE COMPANIONSHIP TO HER SISTER.



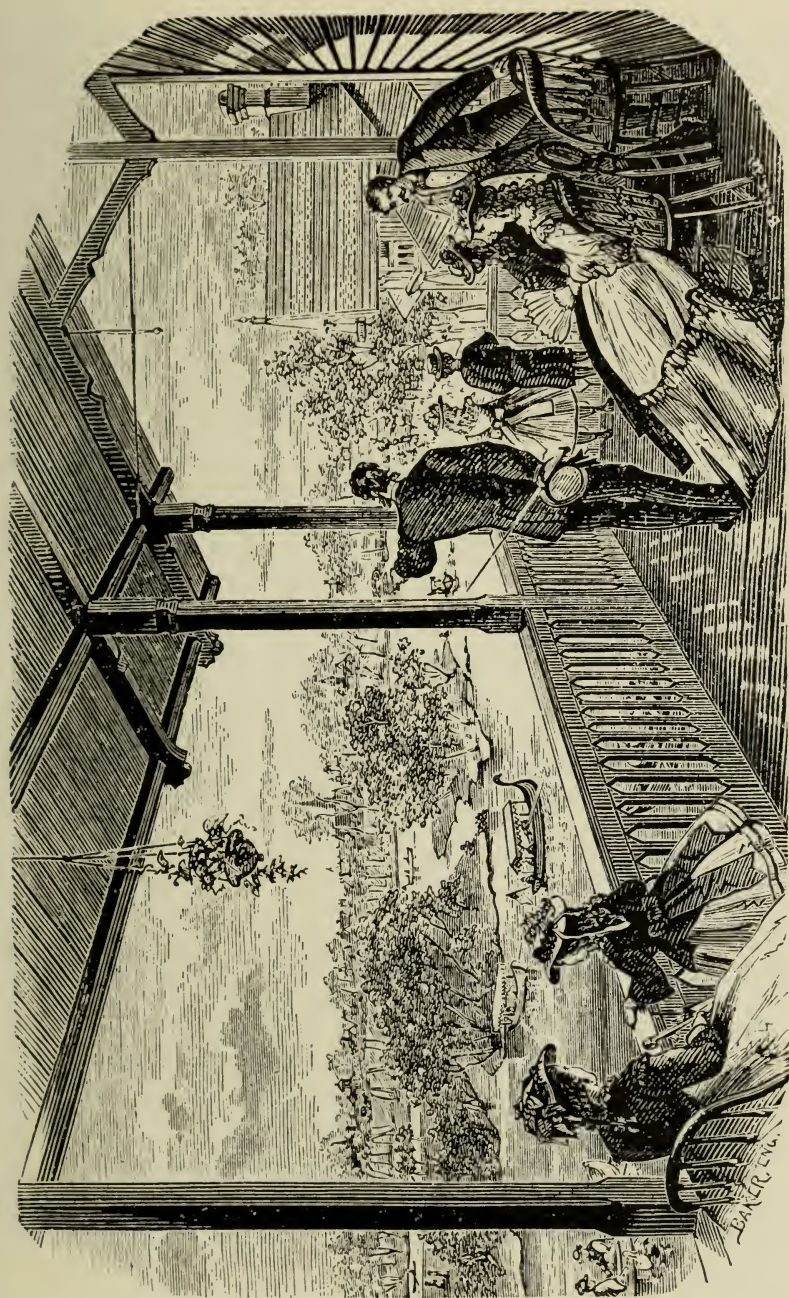
AN ARTIST PICTURED THE ORIGINAL RIVERSIDE HOTEL WITH ACCURACY, ACCORDING TO THOSE WHO SAW THE BUILDING. IT WAS LOCATED ON THE NORTH SIDE OF LAWTON ROAD.



MANY PRESENT DAY RESIDENTS OF RIVERSIDE REMEMBER THE BRIDGE TO PICNIC ISLAND IN THE SWAN POND. THE WATER TOWER, GREEN BLOCK AND REFECTORY IN THE BACKGROUND.



THIS VIEW REPRESENTS THE ARTIST'S CONCEPTION OF THE CONFLUENCE OF LONG COMMON, AKENSIDE AND NUTTALL ROADS, LOOKING TOWARD THE NORTH IN 1871.



GAY WERE THE SCENES ON THE VERANDAH OF THE RIVERSIDE HOTEL REFECTORY IN 1870-71. THE WOOD BLOCKS IN THIS BOOK WERE MADE FOR THE RIVERSIDE IMPROVEMENT COMPANY IN 1871.



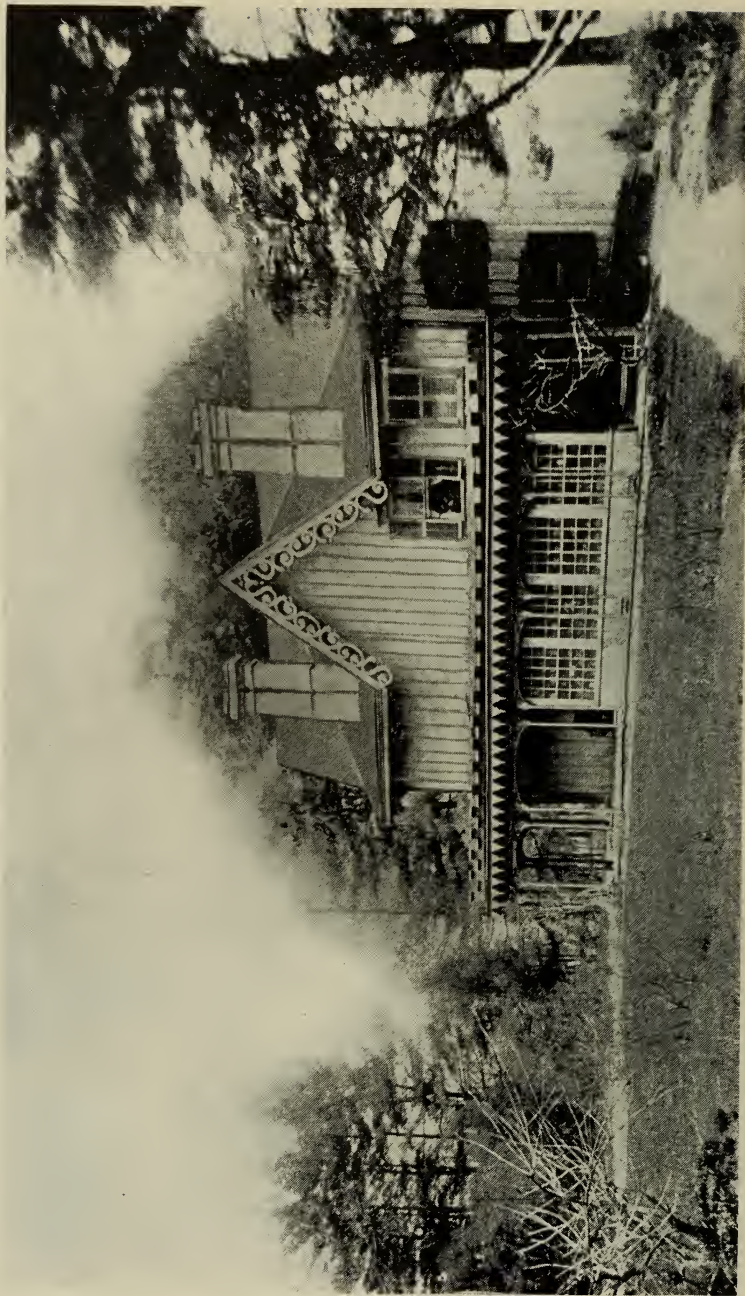
RIVERSIDE CHILDREN ON BANKS OF PORTAGE CREEK LIVE HISTORY IN IMAGINATION.



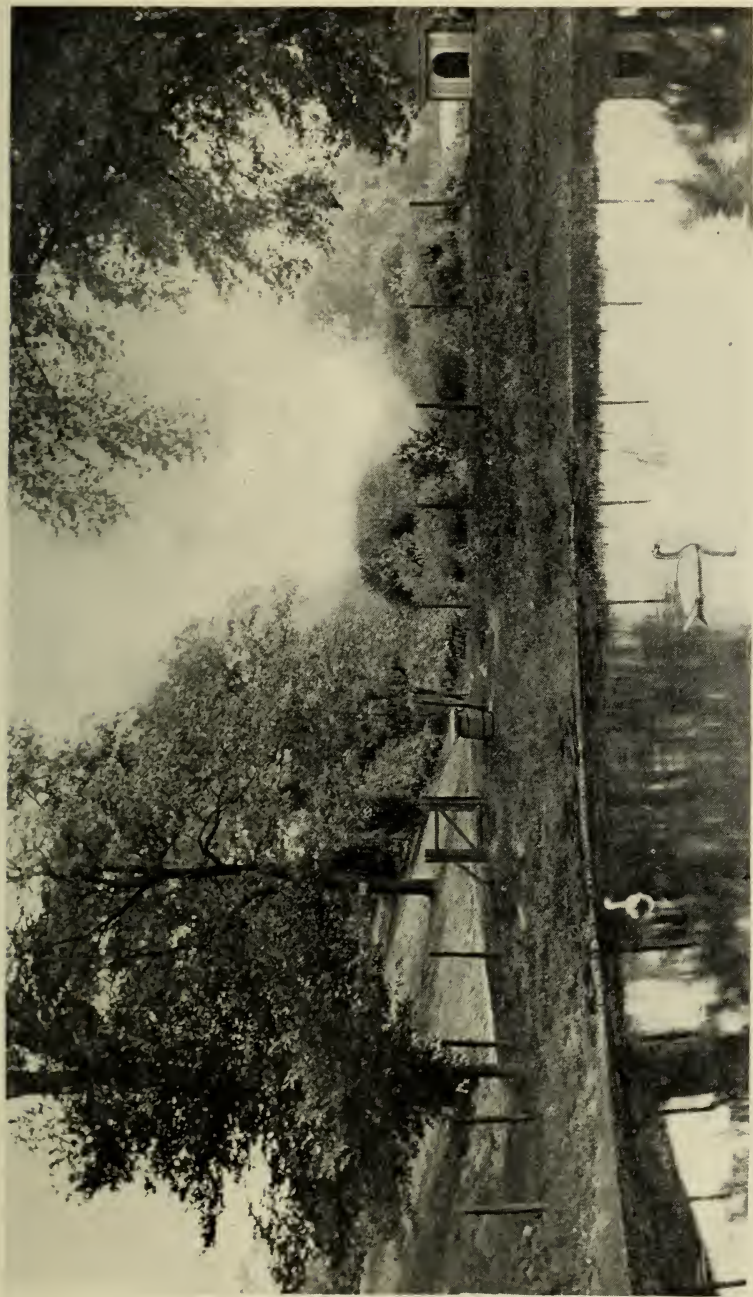
THE STORY OF PIONEER DAYS IS TOLD TO LOCAL CHILDREN GROUPED ABOUT PORTAGE MARKER.



FATHER MARQUETTE AND LOUIS JOLLIET PICTURED AT THE PORTAGE, NEAR THE PRESENT RIVERSIDE, WITH INDIAN BRAVES WHO ESCORTED THEM AND SHOWED THE YOUNG MISSIONARY AND THE EXPLORER THE SHORT ROUTE BACK TO LAKE MICHIGAN IN SEPTEMBER, 1673. THIS IS A PHOTOGRAPHIC REPRODUCTION OF THE ORIGINAL PAINTING IN RIVERSIDE'S PUBLIC LIBRARY.



THE WILLIAM WESENCRAFT HOME WAS BUILT IN 1855. IT WAS MOVED FROM ITS ORIGINAL SITE WHEN PINE AVENUE WAS CUT THROUGH. THE HOMESTEAD WAS CALLED RIVERSIDE FARM.



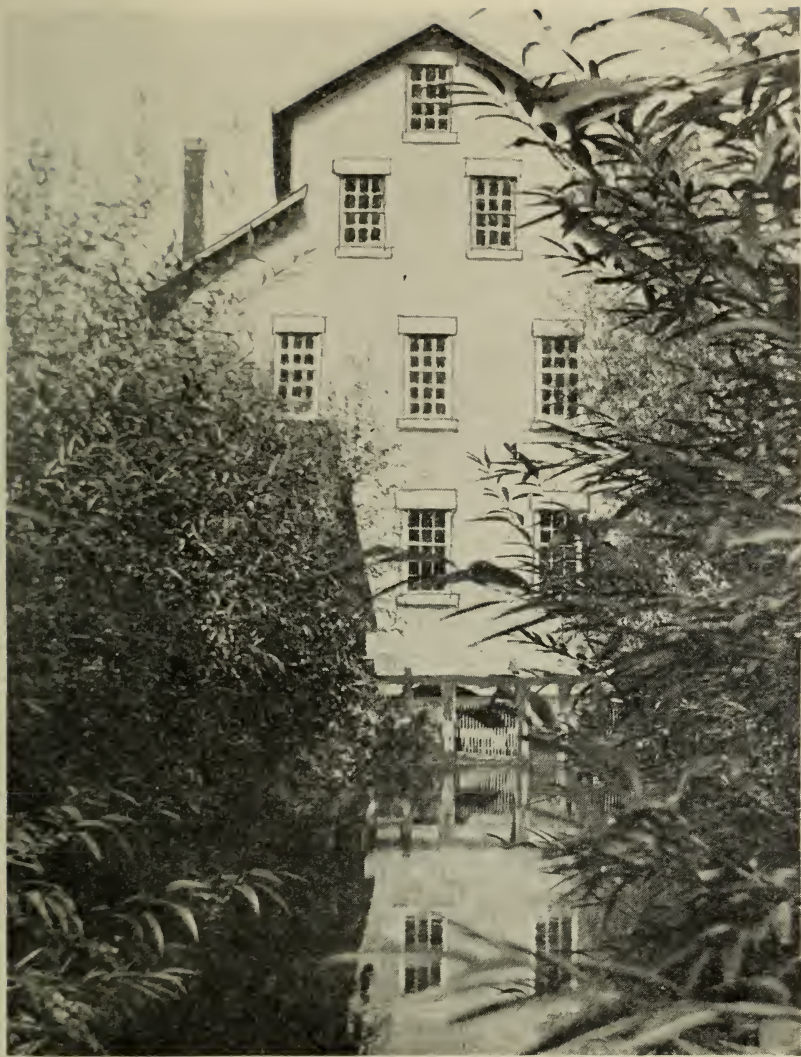
AMONG THE UNUSUAL PICTURES INCLUDED IN THIS BOOK IS THIS VIEW OF THE SWAN POND, ACTUALLY SHOWING SWANS ON IT AND GIVING AN IDEA OF WHAT THIS AREA WAS LIKE IN 1880.



PRESENT DAY RESIDENTS REENACT A PIONEER SCENE AT INDIAN FORD DEDICATION IN 1932.



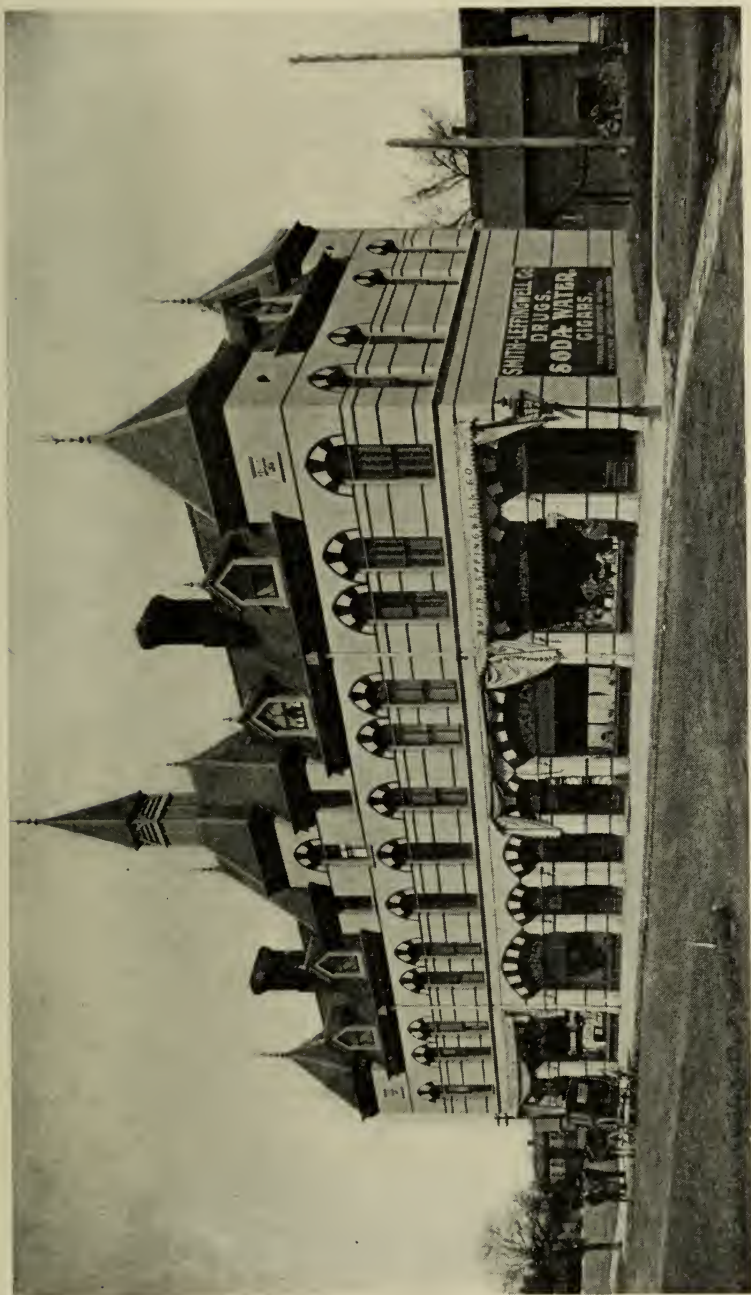
WHEN MRS. KINZIE IN 1831 CALLED ACROSS THE RIVER TO LAUGHTON'S TAVERN, SHE PROBABLY WAS NEAR THE SCENE OF THIS 1935-36 WINTER VIEW.



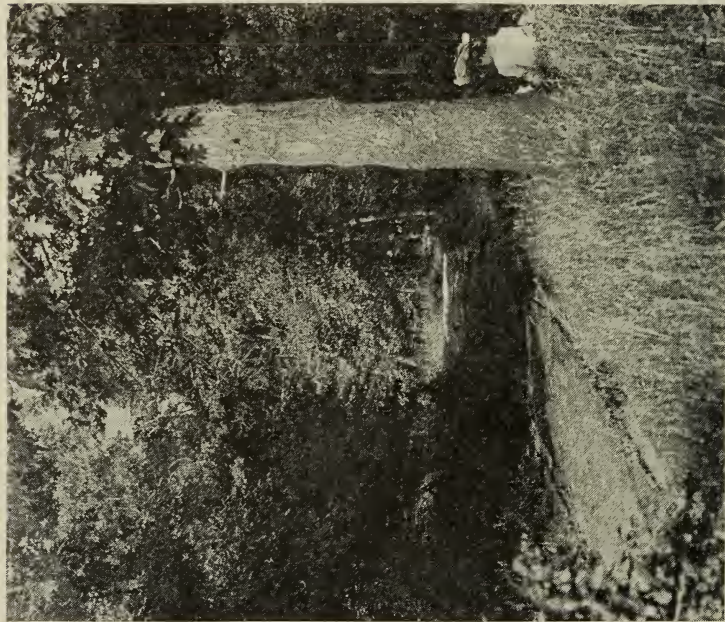
OLD TIME RIVERSIDERS REMEMBER SWIMMING AND FISHING
IN THE RACE AT DR. FOX'S MILL, ON THE SITE OF FORBES'
ORIGINAL MILL.



WHEN THE FIRST CHURCH IN RIVERSIDE, BUILT BY THE IMPROVEMENT COMPANY, WAS DESTROYED BY FIRE IN 1879, THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ERECTED THE ABOVE PICTURED STRUCTURE, USING SOME OF THE STONE FROM THE ORIGINAL BUILDING.



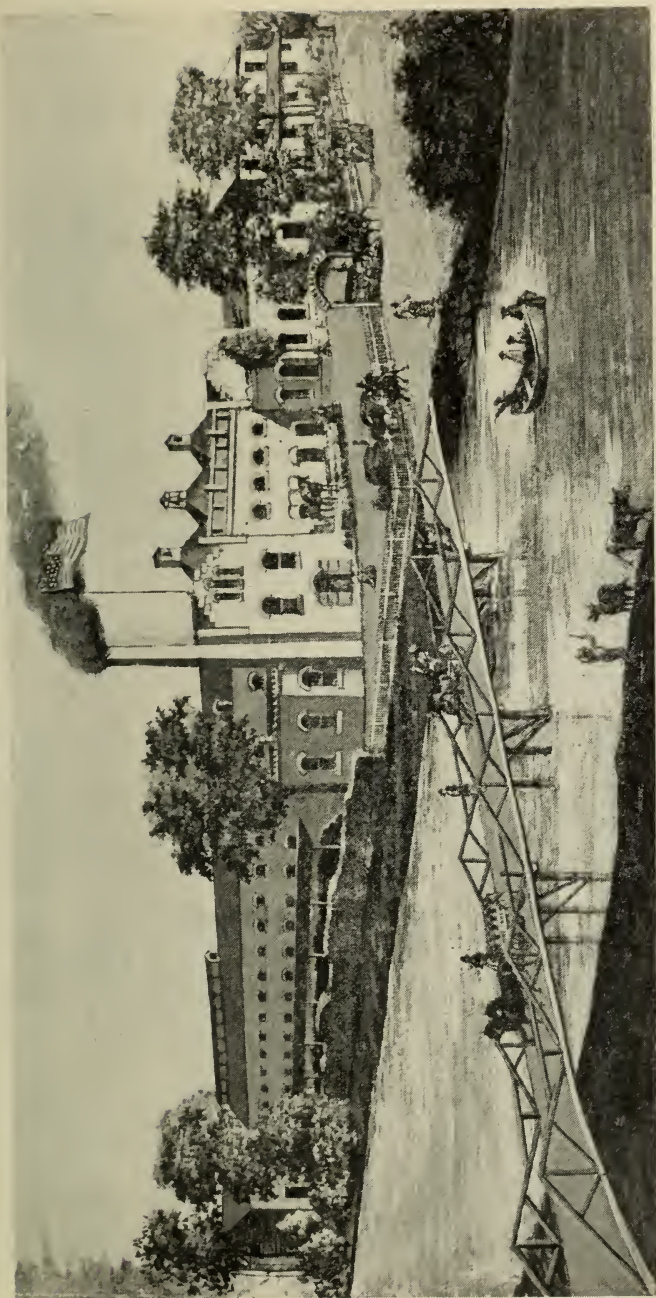
THE GREEN BLOCK, SO NAMED BECAUSE HETTY GREEN OWNED A MORTGAGE ON IT, WAS RIVERSIDE'S FIRST BUSINESS BUILDING. IT WAS BUILT IN 1871. THIS PHOTOGRAPH WAS TAKEN IN 1900.



INDIAN TRAILS WERE COMMON IN RIVERSIDE. THIS ONE, PHOTOGRAPHED IN THE '90's, WAS IN THE FIRST DIVISION.



THIS APPLE TREE IS A 100-YEAR-OLD VETERAN. THE LAST OF THE FORBES ORCHARD, IT BLOSSOMED IN THE SPRING OF 1936.



RECONSTRUCTION OF THE ARCHITECT'S DRAWING OF MUELLER'S BREWERY, LOCATED IN RIVERSIDE ON THE EAST BANK OF THE RIVER AT OGDEN AVENUE. BUILT IN 1856, IT WAS DESTROYED BY FIRE IN 1873.



RIVERSIDE'S FIRST SCHOOL HOUSE, BUILT IN 1874, WAS LOCATED ON FOREST AVE., ABOUT NUMBER 40. BEFORE IT WAS BUILT CLASSES WERE HELD IN THE GREEN BLOCK.



WHAT A STRANGE COMBINATION! A CROQUET COURT IN FRONT OF THE VILLAGE CALABOOSE, LOCATED ON THE RIVER BANK AT BLOOMINGBANK ROAD.

Then and Now

When Stephen and Elvira Forbes, with their daughter Aurilla Anne, came from Chicago to visit John and Anne Forbes, their parents, and John and Mary Forbes arrived with their two boys, Daniel Webster and Henry Clay Forbes, from "up the river Oplain", there were twenty-nine of the large Forbes family gathered in the log house above Bourbon Springs at the bend of the Aux Plaines River.

At the time John and Anne Forbes, with their family, moved to Preble, New York State, in 1818, from Wilmington, Vermont, two older sons stayed behind, Stephen Van Rensselaer Forbes, who went to Moncton, Vermont, where he met his future bride, Elvira Bates, and Garrett Van Hoesen Forbes, who went to Williams' College for a few years. Garrett Forbes was later made editor of the *Zion Herald* in Boston, where he became a life-long friend of Daniel Webster, at that time a lawyer and fiery orator, living also in Boston.

Before the arrival in Aux Plaines of John Forbes and his large family of young married people and grandchildren, his sons Stephen and Sawyer Forbes, in the year 1829, had gone west with a surveying party to Fort Dearborn. They found a small group of less than a hundred settlers, gathered around the Fort in a location known as Chicago. The two brothers had an adventuresome trip, through the wilderness of unexplored woods, far south to Louisiana. We know that Isaac Sawyer Forbes took a river packet up the Mississippi;* a broad lane of many boats carrying cargoes north, to the lead mines at Galena.

Sawyer Forbes branched off at the Illinois river,

*Authority: Henry C. Forbes, son of Isaac Sawyer Forbes (*Forbes Genealogy*).

Riverside

followed it to the Aux Plaines, the same passage used by the early explorers, Marquette and Joliet. He may have come in on the old Sauk trail to the fork of the roads in the timberland near Lyons, where the Indian trail turned north.

Therefore, in 1830, a year before Lieutenant John Kinzie and his party took the same trail, Isaac Sawyer Forbes was journeying along the Aux Plaines River, through the woods, close to the Spring, and the high river bank, where, in a few years, he would find himself living. He came to the ford at the Laughtons' trading post, perhaps meeting David and Bernardus Laughton for the first time. He continued along Mud Lake, most likely using the Old Portage Trail, and, coming in over the sand hills to the south, again reached the settlement around Fort Dearborn.

Sawyer Forbes returned to his family at Preble, New York State, but the virgin country of prairie, woods, and river appealed to Stephen Forbes. Leaving Newburgh, Ohio (now South Cleveland), with his wife, Elvira Bates Forbes, and travelling from Detroit all the way on horseback, he came in 1830, to live in the little settlement at Fort Dearborn.

Stephen Forbes *started the first small school in a log house known as the Sutler's House, just at the outlet of the Chicago river, at the foot of what is now Michigan Avenue. There were but three white children, two of them the Clybourne sisters, the rest being mostly half-breeds. Mrs. Stephen Forbes, who helped with the school, said "Educating the untutored savage was a hard task".

*The picture of Stephen Van Rensselaer Forbes is taken from a daguerrotype which belonged to his namesake and nephew, the late Stephen Alfred Forbes, Ph. D., L.L.D., of the University of Illinois.

Then and Now

When Stephen and Elvira Forbes came to Chicago, they found as residents, the family of Dr. Wolcott, Mr. Miller, who kept a public house at the forks of the river, James Kinzie, old Mr. Scott and Lieutenants Hunter and Ingalls, mentioned in *Wau-bun*, the book by Mrs. John Kinzie. Stephen Forbes entered into the spirit of a frontier town. In 1830 he was elected Justice of the Peace of Peoria County, and in 1832 he was the first elected Sheriff of Cook County, which, at that time, extended north to the Wisconsin line, west almost to Belvidere, and to the southern boundary of Will County. It was an immense territory to police and he had as his assistant deputy, Silas W. Sherman, the grandfather of the late Charles D. Sherman, long an official and resident of the Village of Riverside. Stephen Forbes was also sheriff in 1834 when the military election was held at his house near Bourbon Springs.

In 1830, the same year that Stephen and Elvira Forbes came to Chicago, another son of John Forbes, his namesake John, with his wife Mary Trowbridge Forbes and small son Daniel Webster Forbes, came from Preble, New York, to the little settlement surrounding Fort Dearborn. They lived there in a crude house of those early days, during the horrors of the Black Hawk war in 1832, when the neighboring settlers fled from the Indians on their war-path, to the protection of the Fort. Among them were Stephen and Elvira Forbes from their log house on the Aux Plaines. They doubtless stayed with John and Mary Forbes, crowded in with many others. When Gen. Scott's troop ship arrived to quell the Indian uprising, it was found possessed with a more deadly danger, the Asiatic cholera. From this

Riverside

even greater terror, because it was unseen, the young Forbes' families, Stephen and Elvira, John and Mary and their small son Daniel Webster, fled precipitately, again to the woods on the Aux Plaines River to stay at Laughton's tavern.

In 1833, John and Mary Forbes, with the young boy Daniel moved from Chicago to a homestead "up the Oplain" near the present town of Riverside. When the spring floods came and the river was impassable, they were not able to communicate with the Stephen Forbes family. The probable site of their farm is across the old Scotts ford, along the river bank. It was the home of John and Mary Forbes for five years, until, in 1838, they moved farther west to the high bluffs on the Mississippi River.

In 1831, Stephen Forbes pre-empted 160 acres on the present site of Riverside. It was the S. W. $\frac{1}{4}$ sec. 36, T. 39 R. 12 E., running south from Forest Avenue to 39th Street on a line with Kimbark Road, crossing the Des Plaines River at a point just west of the present Lyons Bridge. It bordered on the west the line of David Laughton's property. This property included what is now called Bourbon Springs, the Island, the winding river east of the dam, the Forbes mill site, the old Indian ford, and the dense woods of what is now Riverside Lawn. The open farming lands which Stephen Forbes later used for cattle, were the prairies that stretched to the east from west of the present depot, within the above confines and south to the river.

The location of the old Forbes log house was shown in the eighteen nineties by Mrs. William Wesencraft, to the Reverend Charles C. Snyder, then pastor of the Presbyterian Church, and to his wife, the former Agnes

Then and Now

Vernette Forbes, daughter of Isaac Sawyer Forbes. The husband of Mrs. Wesencraft had taken down the old house of logs in 1858. Soon after, Flavilla Forbes Snow Bliss, who at the age of eleven was one of the children living in Aux Plaines, the summer of 1836, verified the location given by Mrs. Wesencraft. The old foundation timbers of the log house were still to be seen at that time, and some of the old apple trees were bearing blossoms and fruit. One of these original apple trees is still standing in the yard of the O. C. Schultz home on Scottswood Road, and in the spring of 1936 its gnarled and aged branches bore blossoms.

The Forbes log house was west of the depot and the present wooden fence, placed at the continuation of the Barry Point Road and south of the Burlintgon track.

It was Elvira Forbes, sister of Sophia Laughton, who moved into the woods on the Aux Plaines to be company to the young Mrs. Bernardus Laughton, the bride of a year. Three years later, in April of 1834, Bernardus and David Laughton both died within a week of each other, and Stephen Forbes helped to bury them. They had lived but four years in their newly built tavern, on the Aux Plaines River.

The next month, on May 26th, John and Mary Forbes had a small son, Henry Clay Forbes, born to them on their farm "up the River Oplain". On June 3, the following month, a small daughter, Aurilla Anne, was born to Stephen and Elvira Forbes at Aux Plaines. The military election was held June 7th of this same month, at the house of Stephen Forbes, and in July, the month following, Mrs. Aurilla Bates, the mother of Elvira Forbes and Sophia Laughton, passed away at the Forbes home. It is most probable that Stephen

Riverside

Forbes closed the log house and with his wife and young baby, the recently bereaved Mrs. Bernardus Laughton, and her little son David, went into Chicago to live.

In the spring of 1836, one hundred years ago, John and Anne Forbes left the small town of Chicago, where they had come from Preble, New York State. They were on their way to the farm of their son, Stephen Forbes, where they were going to live on the banks of the Aux Plaines River, part of the present site of Riverside. In the untouched freshness of virgin woods it was then even more beautiful than now.

They were accompanied by the five sturdy sons and sons-in-law, the five capable daughters and daughters-in-law, with the little happy, restless group of ten children, Flavilla the eldest, eleven years old. They must have been crowded into prairie schooners, the lumbering, heavy-eyed oxen urged onward, perhaps by Stephen Forbes or John, who had met them and knew the way.

Over the long stretch of prairie on the southwestern road they doubtless came, and, because it was spring, the large iron-rimmed wheels of the heavy schooners crushed the wild flowers that for miles and miles as far as the eyes could see, mingled with the green grasses. They bordered the marsh lands where Berwyn now is, and saw the wild ducks and geese that settled on the swamps.

They entered the spring roads on the Aux Plaines River, with a sky of soft green leaves overhead. There were linden, ash, and tall elm trees, with the wild nut trees everywhere. In time they left the southwestern road and turned north along the river bank, where Riverside Drive is now. So near the end of their journey, the children may have been running beside the slowly

Then and Now

moving oxen, darting into the woods for a bouquet of fragrant wild violets or a cluster of blue-bells. The prairie schooners turned west with the bend of the river, passing in front of the present old hotel, the children racing ahead to follow the river, up and down its steep banks. Glimpses of a dwelling must have appeared through the trees and, at the bend of the river above Bourbon Springs, they came to the Forbes log house.

There it stood, against a background of woods, in the midst of an orchard of apple, plum and peach trees, freshly green with the new leaves of spring. And where the heavy traffic is today, the silence of the woods surrounded it.

The Forbes log house was a large one to take care of the twenty-two members of the John Forbes family, when the prairie schooners deposited them at its doorstep. There are treasured letters in the care of the two granddaughters' of Flavilla Forbes***, who was the oldest of the ten little children, coming to Aux Plaines in the spring of 1836. They were written to Flavilla when she had left Aux Plaines, by her grandmother, Anne Sawyer Forbes, during the years 1837-38. Flavilla, the small school teacher, was the beloved dependable child of twelve, to whom all the letters of her elders were addressed, and whose amazing character shone with the clearness of a steady light. She too walked those hard pioneer days "with a lantern in her hand".

The grandmother says, "I stay here in the old mansion house", and one can readily see the large log building, with its upper half story. There would be a long

*A deep sense of gratitude is due Winifred Lyman Worthington, of San Diego, California, and Edna Lyman Scott, of Los Angeles, California, for releasing these valuable old letters and daguerrotypes of Flavilla Forbes Snow to the residents of Riverside for their Centennial Celebration.

Riverside

heavily timbered kitchen, with a huge fireplace holding big logs from the woods; the pots and kettels hanging on an old iron crane over the hearth. There would be other small rooms and a loft where many could sleep.

The summer of 1836 was a happy one. They were content, John and his family, the men working on the farm, hunting deer in the woods, or bringing in the wild quail and prairie chickens, the wild ducks and geese from the marshes. The women were busy with the home, spinning on the high spinning wheels, their yarn of wool, which they dyed with the juice of walnuts from the woods; spinning also the fine threads for their linen on the low flax wheels. They made all the clothes for the family, the men and boys also, and the dresses with the quaint full gathered skirts for the little girls with a bit of white pantalets showing below. The children spent many happy days in the woods, running up and down the river bank or leaning far over to touch with their lips the cool waters of Bourbon Springs.

The Forbes family were not successful farmers. Taking up homesteads was only a means of reaching the new far countries. They have been a studious family, and from those who were born on the pariries of Illinois, have come renowned educators and scientists of international repute.

It is not strange then, to find the small Flavilla Forbes, at the age of eleven, teaching a school of eight, that summer. She had been to a Female Academy at Courtlandville in New York State. She gathered around her the numerous small children and while she was at Aux Plaines the lessons came first. There are telling phrases to be found in the old letters that grandmother Forbes wrote to the little school teacher just after she

Then and Now

had left Aux Plaines. "Tell Mary and Henery they must not let Cousin Henney and Admetus get the start of them, if they have no school to go to." "Flavius is getting to be quite a good scholar, he improves fast this spring." "Henry says I must tell you he studies grammar and can parse first rate."

In the present Indian gardens there were still lingering on, in 1836, a small band of Potawatami Indians. Years later Flavilla Forbes told her granddaughters that one day when she was eleven she went to visit the Indians in the Indian gardens with her father, who had business with the Indian chief. Sitting in the cool shade of the trees there, Flavilla saw the Indian squaws gathered around their fire. It was near noon and on the coals was a huge black pot, steaming and hot, filled with a stew of meat and potatoes. Flavilla was small for her age and very frightened, even if she was a school teacher. An old squaw speared a steaming potato with a stick and came towards her. Her father lifted her in his arms. It smelled terribly good, she remembered always, and regretted even when she was a little old lady, that she had refused that one fragrant potato.

Within the big log house was an open stairway to the loft where the children slept, and Flavilla, telling her granddaughters, remembered peering over the edge of the open stairs one day into a big black soap kettle, and, terrified with fright, seeing a black snake curled within. Flavilla told of her father finding one day in what she called the bayou (the swamp land by Bourbon Springs) a wild swan with a broken wing. The wild trumpeter swans made their southeast trek directly over the little settlement of Aux Plaines without stopping, and the

Riverside

finding of a white swan with a broken wing was so unusual it was something Flavilla remembered always.

In the summer of 1836, quite a commotion took place in the countryside, when, on July 4th, was celebrated, with formal festivities, the beginning of the actual construction of the Illinois and Michigan canal. Canal lots were quickly sold and new settlers of a different type began to pour into these peaceful surroundings of woods and quiet river.

It must have disturbed greatly the young men of the Forbes family, who, with their small children, were seeking permanent farming lands. It was a warning that this country would in time be overcrowded. One by one the family groups left John and Anne Forbes at Aux Plaines. In the fall of 1836 Isaac Sawyer and Agnes Van Hoesen Forbes departed with their family of four, including Flavilla, the small school teacher, to a claim northwest on the Pecatonica River. It was on this farm that Stephen Alfred and Agnes Vernetta Forbes were born, in a log cabin. That fall of 1836, of the other sons and daughters, two families of five each left for distant parts. In the spring of 1837, six more followed, including John and Mary Forbes, from their nearby farm, with their sons Daniel Webster and Henry Clay, who moved to Bellevue on the high banks of the Mississippi. With them went the young bride and groom, Harvey and Adaline, "who had hard feed they broke down and Adaline had to ride on horseback 35 miles without saddle or bridle poor girl".*

Of the twenty-four of his family who were with John Forbes on the Aux Plaines River in 1836, in the

*From letter written by Anne Forbes headed "bellfountain illinois, Aprile 9th, 1837".

Then and Now

spring of 1837 only two remained, Frederick and Mary Anne Winslow, and all the ten little children had gone.

Anne Forbes, the grandmother, wrote to the small Flavilla in the middle of the winter, Jan. 1st, 1837. In the Forbes log house she may have been sitting by the great fire, wearing a quaint white cap on her soft grey hair. The snow such as we see in Riverside in a January must have drifted against the old log house; the branches of the trees must have bent low with its weight, and the river and the swans pond have been frozen over. Early settlers were busy with things we take for granted; the spinning and the soap making and candle dipping, the getting up at day-light, and, to save candles, the going to bed at dark. With few books and without schools there was no formal education in a new country. Anne Forbes wrote with the original quaint old-fashioned spelling, without punctuation, that was characteristic of her day:

“Dear Flavilla Anne I received your letter today and hasten to answer it I am glad to hear from you and that you are all well and in good spirits and I wish you all a happy new year the Best in your lives I stay here in the old mantion house as contented as a weaned child I have no society but my own family we are all very well and happy” Then a sad note creeps in “I hope you will all come and visit us as soon as you can Harvey has almost concluded to go to MacLean county—your Uncle John is not determined where he shall move yet I expect they will all leave us in the spring to Die on the oplains alone but we must not complain we have enough of everything we need to live on.—Harriet (in Preble) is dashing about among the boys and if I live I suppose I shall soon hear that Flavilla is going to be

Riverside

married (She was then twelve years old and was married at sixteen) but dear girl I hope you will wait a good while and make a wise choice when you choose a husband but you will say this is a foolish letter I wonder what Grandma means but I am old and childish and hope you will excuse me and do write again for it pleases me very much my love to all your folks so goodnight from your Grandmother with love and sincerity

Anne Forbes."

Then the spring rains came. The river pushed over its low marshy edges, covering the Island and seeping far in, to the Bourbon Springs. It roared over the rapids. By flooding the low places it cut off communication with John and Mary Forbes "up the river Oplain." The dark days were depressing to the grandmother, Anne Forbes. She missed the sound of the happy children's voices.

She next wrote to Flavilla in the spring of 1837. The letter is headed, Belle Fountain,—beautiful fountain, the early French name by which the Spring was known long before it became Bourbon Springs.

"Bellfountain illinois Aprile the 9th 1837

'Dear flavilla with the help of two pair of glasses I sit down to try to write a few lines to you we hear yesterday that Hervey Waters had got home and today your grandpa went there through water to get a letter and behold there was none so he returned quite disappointed could you not spend time to write us one line to cheer our hearts in this lonesome situation We suffered considerable hardship to come and live with our children but they have all gone and left us except Fredrick and Mary and they intend to go soon. Mr. Weeks

Then and Now

(mentioned in *Wau-bun*) is going to move soon and then there will not be one family left here I know not where we shall go your Uncle John gave grandpa his claim up the river oplains but the going has been so bad they could not get through the road is very bad the water has been very high it is now falling fast and I hope it will soon be warm weather again we have had very cold snowy winter* very different from what I expected but it is past with our gone by years and we shall see it no more forever O let us all try to gain an inheritance in that world which will not pass away—tell the children they must all be good work well and learn well tell Henny (age three) if he learns well Grandma will send him a new geography I hope Francis (age eight) will help his father a great deal and Mary (age six) make all his shirts and stockings and Flavilla (age twelve) teach them all she can and their Mother Govern and Counsel them all in the right way and so be a happy family do all you can to bring up your children well I must bid you goodby

Anne Forbes''

In the summer of 1837 the children of John and Anne Forbes, with the grandchildren, went back and forth in their visits to the large log house. They evidently loved the woods, the walks along the river bank, the apples and peaches and plums from the orchard around the log house. They liked the carefree life for the children. Flavilla received a letter from her Aunt Elizabeth headed

*The winter of 1836-37 was an exceptionally hard one.

Riverside

"Oplain July 29th 1837

Dear Sis

We were very glad to hear from you. Grandma said it did her so much good to read letters from you. She could hardly tell it. She says that she doesn't feel able to write now but when she gets better and your Pa comes she will write you a long letter but we hope you will come with him when you can, we should all be rejoiced to see you once more on the Oplain where we last saw you.—We shall probably stay here a month or two. Francis and Mary and Henry are remembered by us and our children and ever will be

Your Aunt Elizabeth"

Stephen and Elvira Forbes came out frequently those years from Chicago, to visit with the father and mother, John and Anne Forbes.

The summer of 1837 passed with an outstanding high-light. Daniel Webster came to Aux Plaines. He was passing through, coming from some lands to the west in which he was interested. A committee from Chicago came as far as Bourbon Springs to meet him. Among them was Silas W. Sherman, previously mentioned. Without doubt Daniel Webster visited, in the log house, John and Anne Forbes, the father and mother of his intimate friend, Garrett Van Hoesen Forbes of Boston. John Forbes, the son, had named his first boy, Daniel Webster Forbes, after the famous friend of his brother Garrett.

In the fall of 1837, the Forbes log house was again

*Courtesy of Mrs. Frank N. Bass, Freeport, Illinois.

Then and Now

filled to overflowing for two nights, not only with people but with happiness attendant upon meeting old friends. Loring Snow, a prosperous mill owner from Poolville, New York State, had taken the weeks of water passage by the Great Lakes and was on his way to Freeport on the Pecatonica river. Sawyer Forbes, soon to be a close neighbor, met him in Chicago. Part of a letter of Loring Snow's follows:*

"After we landed we put up at a tavern two days to make a wagon box and buy some oxen. Our bill at the Tavern was 6.00 per day. When there I met Mr. Forbes our nearest neighbor. He was there with an Ox team and I hired one yoke of his Oxen and bought another and we started about three o'clock in the afternoon for Des Plaines where his father lived. We went 9 miles over the Prairie before we passed a house and we for the first time saw the Prairie on fire. We staid two days at old Mr. Forbes and then started on. The slieus were so that we often had to double the teams, there were two yoke of oxen and 4 cows, 2 calves and eleven persons."

The last old letter from the grandmother, Anne Forbes, is headed

"Oplain Ill. May 23rd 1838.

"My dear Flavilla I recived your letter by Uncle Winslow and am glad to hear from you as the health and prosperity of your father's family lyes near my heart so in returning will let you know how we get along this spring in the first place your aunt Elizabeth and family left us about the middle of March I was lonesome beyond description but have got in some measure over that as I have plenty of folks around but o

*Courtesy of Mrs. Frank N. Bass, Freeport, Illinois.

Riverside

Dear I canont tell you what sort of company they are the men are miserable drunkards* the children awful swearers the women would be something if they could and you may judge how I feel. Your grandpa is very well and smart he is to work on the farm planting and making garden the weather has been very cold and wet this spring but now is quite dry your grandpa got all his cattle through the winter well we milk four cows have three fine calves and the handsomest colt that ever was I wish your pa had such a fine mare and colt for the boys tell francis we have plenty of hens eggs and chickens that will please him tell Mary and Henery they must not let Cousin Henney and Admetus Salisbury get the Start of them in learning if they have no school to go to uncle josephs boys are smart little fellows I wish you could see them we talk of going to Napersville next week I long to see little F. M. and Kiss his sweet face your Aunt Amanda has four smart children they are all well at present Flavilla I have knit you a pair of stocking which I will send by Mr. Wright and a little Book which I hope you will receive as a small present from your grandmother remember dear girl time is short we shall soon have done with writing to each other let us try to improve our time here so as to meet in a better world where farewells will be heard no more please give my love to your father and mother brothers and sister Adiew Flavilla Anne this from your affectionate Grandmother

Anne Forbes"

In the old letters a picture is brought to us of Aux Plaines in 1836, one hundred years ago. The big log

*Transient workers on the Illinois and Michigan canal.

Then and Now

house in the woods facing the river was the home of John and Anne Forbes, their children coming and going, some of them in prairie schooners, a hundred miles or more, to spend months with the old father and mother.

John Forbes was glad his cattle were through the winter; he admired the fine mare and the "handsomest colt that ever was." He worked in the garden around the log house. Anne Forbes did the housework in the large heavily timbered kitchen. She looked out of the eight little square panes of its windows and saw the pink and white blossoms of the fruit orchard, bursting into bloom. She sat in the firelight by the great hearth and knitted.

Only four months after the above last letter was written to the small Flavilla, "In that old log house, Grandmother Forbes of sacred memory and rare nobility of character, passed from earth,"* In 1838 just at the summer's turn into autumn, Anne Sawyer Forbes was laid away, in a burial ground on the river bank, in front of the former Blayney residence on Bloomingbank road.

Once more the Forbes log house was closed. John Forbes lived with his children then and, in 1844, was laid beside his wife, Anne Forbes, on the banks of the Aux Plaines River.

Stephen Forbes at some time, again returned to live on his farm. His children were Aurilla Anne and a twin boy and girl, Paulina and Pliney. He bought and traded land until his holdings amounted to 1,800 acres, some of it south of the Des Plaines river and west of Lyons.

In 1849 he joined many neighboring settlers going

*From lecture by the late Reverend Chas. C. Snyder, Riverside, Ill.

Riverside

west to the gold fields of California. In 1852, he was one of the Commissioners of Highways and also Assessor of the Township of Proviso. In 1853, Stephen Forbes sold to Dr. Egan of Chicago his farm at Riverside and all of his property, for twenty dollars an acre. He moved back to his old home at Newburgh, Ohio, but passed away Feb. 11th, 1879, at the home of his son-in-law Nathan S. Peck, the husband of Aurilla Anne Forbes.

"Throughout nearly all of his long life Mr. Forbes enjoyed remarkably good health. He was a man of integrity and endowed with a good stock of common sense, which he used in an honest practical way.*

With occasional interruptions, Stephen Forbes lived on the present townsite of Riverside for almost twenty years.

Vernette Snyder Ripley.

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*A clipping from the Chicago Tribune, Feb. 13, 1879, kept by his nephew, the late Stephen A. Forbes.

CHAPTER V

THIRTY YEARS OF GENESIS

MEAGRE are the details of events and life along the Aux Plaines in this vicinity during the 1840's and the early years of the '50's. Strategically located for a tavern site and possessing many characteristics desirable in the establishing of a home, the neighborhood of Belle Fontaine (Bourbon Springs) held an appeal only as an oasis to the westward bound pioneers. They were seeking vast stretches of prairie country where they could set down their plows and turn the good earth without having to clear the land of trees and other heavy growth. The trend was westward and twelve miles out of the fast growing metropolis on Lake Michigan was not far enough west. Farther west there was land to be had for the price of homesteading it. The Aux Plaines land was now owned by individuals, and, although they were willing to sell, it was cheaper to travel onward beyond the Aux Plaines valley to free land.

There was no particular change in this locality after 1838 for many years. If Riverside property owners examine their abstracts, they will discover that Stephen Forbes held title to most of this area at one time or another. Forbes continued to buy and sell land in this vicinity although he was not a continuous resident here.

Riverside

Records show that he built a mill on his property just east of the south end of the present Riverside-Lyons bridge. It is thought that this first mill was a sawmill which supplied lumber to such wagon-makers as Schuttler, Weber, and Peterman of Chicago. In 1845 the Illinois Legislature gave Mr. Forbes the right to construct a permanent dam and a mill-race. In 1852 and 1853, shortly after his return from the California gold rush, Forbes sold his holdings along the Aux Plaines to Dr. William B. Egan.

The mill, and the right to operate the dam, were purchased by Stephen White of Lyons.

As this is the history of the Portage area, it is pertinent here and later to tell something about the early residents of the Village of Lyons whose history until the middle of the nineteenth century is closely interwoven with that of Riverside. Stephen White first came to Lyons in 1830, but he did not settle there at that time. He tried other places and finally returned to Lyons in 1840 and continued to live there from then on until his death. He acquired considerable land in Lyons, in Section 2, which lies west of the present Joliet Avenue. The old White family homestead is still standing on the south side of Ogden Avenue, a short distance east of Lawndale Avenue, and many of the descendants of the White family continue to make their home in that village, and some are residents of Riverside.

Dr. Fox, a son-in-law of Stephen White, took over the mill property, and in 1856 he replaced the original mill building with a two-story stone structure that stood until near the end of the century. This second mill was a grist mill serving farmers for a considerable distance south and west.

Then and Now

A very interesting event, and one that presaged the ultimate development of Riverside, occurred in 1849. In that year Isaac Cook acquired from Frederick Bronson the east half of Section 36. Bronson had bought this land from Forbes in 1840. Cook decided to develop this piece of land and in October of 1857 he recorded a plat on rectangular lines for The Town of Cooksville, subdivided for a residential community. The present maps of Riverside still show traces of Cook's subdivision in the south-east corner. The time was not ripe for Cook's project and so the development was never carried through.

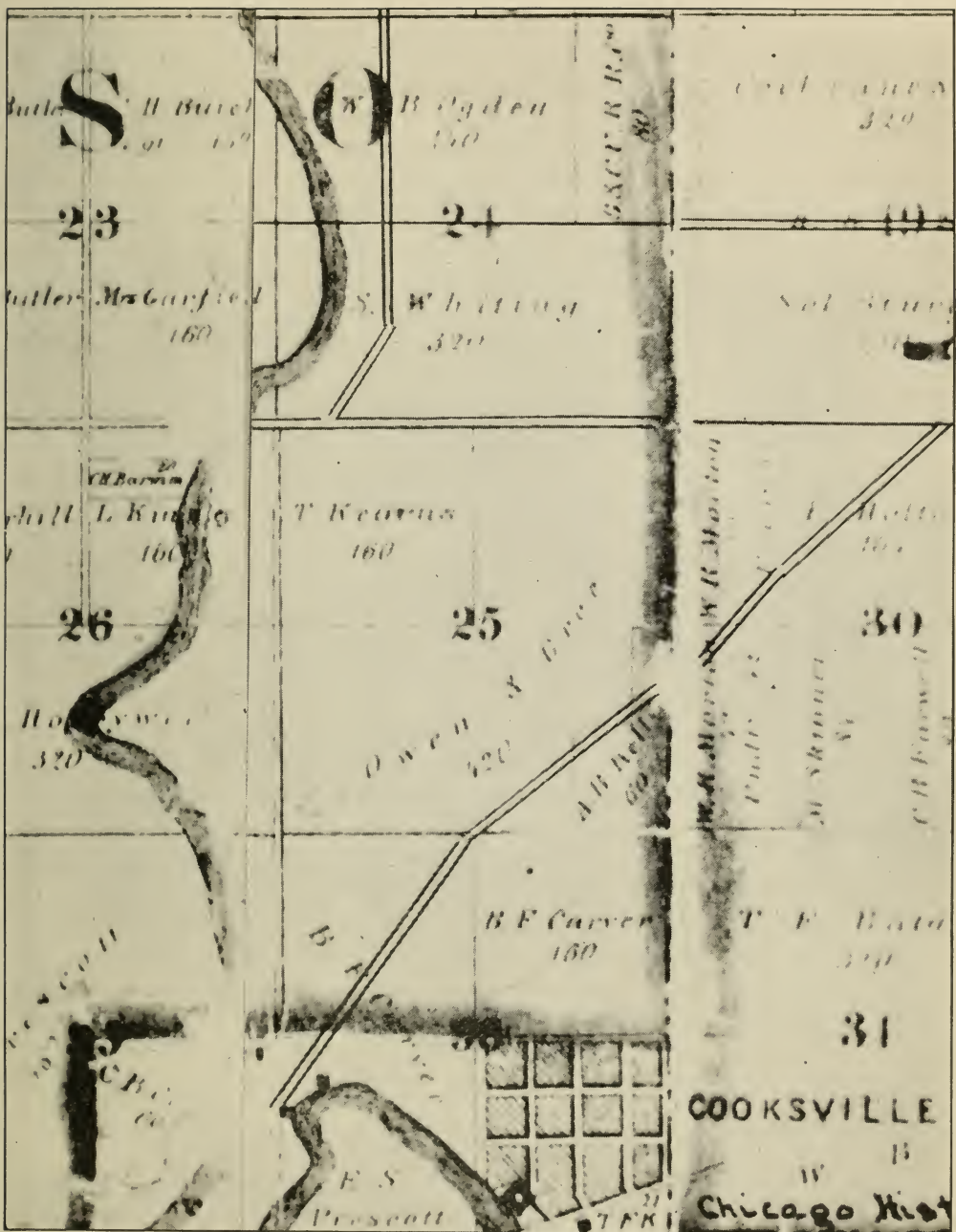
Another important event that affected this area about the middle of the century was the completion of the Southwest Plank Road. Prairie mud, even on a much-traveled road, offered many obstacles to the heavily loaded covered wagon, especially during the spring and fall rainy season. An artificial road-bed was needed, and highway builders responded with the plan for a plank road. on a continuous line of two stringers, eight foot long planks, three inches thick, were laid from Chicago to Riverside. This first stretch was completed in 1848. Later the plank road was extended to Naperville. No gasoline tax was available to pay for road building in those days. The Southwest Plank Road was constructed by a private corporation and a toll was charged everyone who used the highway. There was a toll gate at the Chicago city limit and another at Joliet Avenue in Lyons. The toll was 37½ cents for a four-horse vehicle, 25 cents for a single team, and 12½ cents for a horse and rider. Traffic over the plank road was of sufficient volume to provide a handsome profit to the corporation that built it.

Riverside

In those early days, as now, main arteries of traffic attracted commercial enterprises. Instead of the ubiquitous gasoline station, there were taverns, at intervals, to provide shelter and food for horses as well as travelers. Two taverns were built in Lyons on either side of the newly constructed plank road. One was Sackett's Tavern located on the north side of the road on land now part of the Hofmann triangle at Joliet Avenue. The other was Lund's Tavern on the south side of the road just a little west of Sackett's. Lund's Tavern building, remodeled to 1936 tavern standards, is still standing and a post-prohibition tavern is conducted there.

Sackett's Tavern later was run by Doty. Still later it came to be known as Yorkshire Tavern, and it became an important stopping off place for farmers who drove their cattle to the Chicago market. Large cattle pens were built close to the tavern to accommodate the cattle owners who wanted to stop over night. George Hofmann Sr. came to Lyons in 1864 and bought the Yorkshire Tavern. He had come to Chicago in 1844, and in 1855 his son, George Hofmann, who is still a resident of Lyons, was born at the Plank Road House then located at Western and the Southwest Plank Road.

Kellogg's Tavern west of Harlem Avenue, and Storr's Tavern east of Harlem Avenue, on Barry's Point Road, are shown on a map of 1851. Kellogg's Tavern was later known as Hasting's Tavern and at one time Jean Beaubien, the same Beaubien who was elected Colonel at the Bourbon Springs episode, was a proprietor of this tavern. It stood across the roadway from where the Cornelius Sullivan family home is now located on Riverside Drive near Harlem avenue. An-



PART OF BURNHAM'S & VANVECHTAN'S MAP OF 1861 SHOWING OWNERSHIP OF LAND, WITH COOKSVILLE INDICATED.

Then and Now

other important landmark of the time was Mueller's Brewery, located on the east bank of the Des Plaines River north of Ogden Avenue. The ruins of this old structure provided sub-terranean passages and caves for children to play in up until a dozen years ago.

In 1855, two years before Cook recorded his Cooksvill subdivision of the section of land in the south-east corner of what is now Riverside, the William Wesencraft family arrived in this vicinity to establish a farm and an orchard. Mr. Wesencraft bought 26½ acres, mostly in Section 35. As a coincidence, the home that he built is being remodeled in this centennial year into a multiple family dwelling. This building, now located at 78 Pine Avenue, is not on its original site. It was moved when Pine Avenue was cut through from Barry Point Road to the river.

Near the Wesencraft home there was a log house that stood for many years, and that was popularly believed to have been a trading store in early pioneer days. Today it is thought to have been one of the Forbes farm buildings.

Charlotte Wesencraft, daughter of William Wesencraft, lived in the family homestead until her death in 1933. She was the only person who lived in this vicinity through the years of its transition from a farm area into a model suburban residential community.

Benjamin F. Carver, Thos. J. S. Flint, and Granger Adams acquired large holdings of land in this vicinity. At one time Carver owned 750 acres. The David Laughton ¼ Section was willed to Jacob Harsen. Harsen sold to David Cooper. Robert Huginin, Theodorus Doty, David C. Thatcher, and Isaac Cook later became interested in this land. Cook sold to A. B. Kellogg and

Riverside

Ephraim Holton 5 acres extending from Barry Point Road to the river, including the present Presbyterian Church property, which was known as the Old Burial Ground as shown on one of the maps. In 1864 David A. Gage bought up these holdings, comprising about 1,600 acres, for an estate, and a horse and cattle breeding farm. But two years before Gage came, another event took place that is of vital importance in the history and development of Riverside.

In 1862 interest was developed in the organization of a railroad system south-west out of Chicago to parallel the Southwest Plank Road. In December of that year, the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad purchased, from William Wesencraft, a strip of land for a right-of-way. The purchase price for this strip is said to have been \$800.

A double track was laid from Chicago west to the Des Plaines River in 1863 and a station was built at the west terminal, which was named Lyons. The name Aux Plaines or O'Plain was lost sight of, in spite of the fact that the station was only a few yards away from the site of the first settlement in this area. The road was opened for operation May 20, 1864.

Several bits of interesting information are connected with that first stretch of railroad. Holton and Coolidge were contractors for the railroad. Holton later built a house that still stands as a part of the Chateau Des Plaines property on Ogden Avenue. The first station agent at "Lyons" was Frank Potter. He married Anna Lund, daughter of the Lyons tavernkeeper. The naming of the railroad station influenced Mr. Hofmann to change the name of his Yorkshire Tavern to the Lyons Tavern. When the railroad was extended west-

Then and Now

ward to Aurora in 1865 the next station west of Lyons, located where La Grange is now, was called West Lyons.

Present day residents of Riverside occasionally see references in the press to the Gage Farm nursery owned by the City of Chicago, and a few years back a Chicago and Cook County School for Delinquent Boys was conducted in buildings located on a part of the old Gage Farm. This unit of land is only a small portion of what once was David A. Gage's 1,600 acre estate along the banks of the Des Plaines River, purchased in 1864 as related previously.

Two large farm houses, barns, corrals for horses and cattle, and a half-mile racing track were the features of the Gage estate. One of the farm houses was located near where Olmstead Road joins Riverside Road. Gilbert Lacy, the caretaker for the horses, lived in this house which was a short distance south of the racing track. A firm named Coyle, Simpson, and Gage managed the horses. Cornelius Sullivan drove the trotting horses in their exhibitions and races. Mr. Sullivan later became Riverside's first postmaster and his descendants continue to reside in the village. The farm house told about above was later occupied by the Winser family, and they conducted a truck farm in that neighborhood for many years.

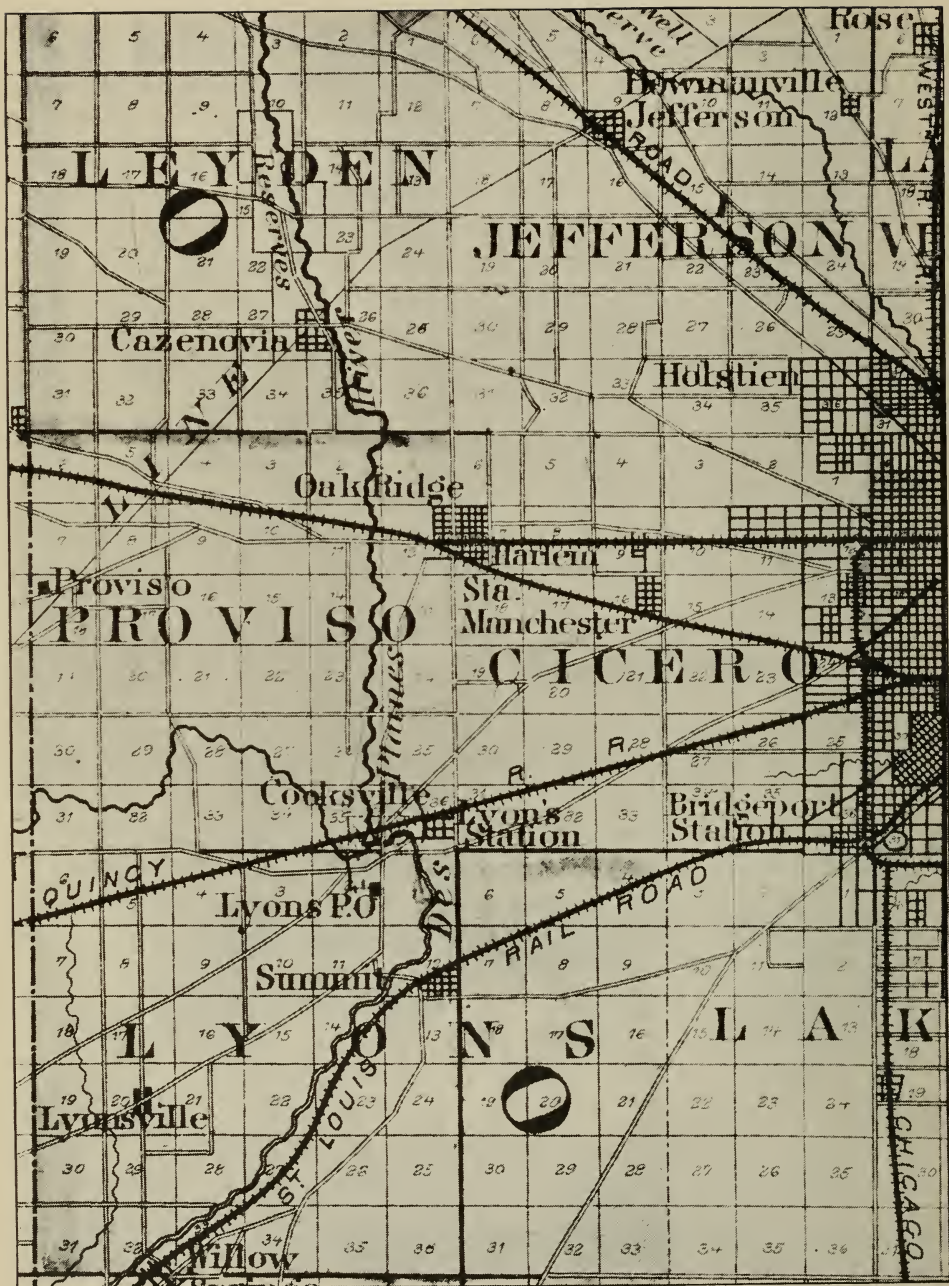
George Hofmann remembers a house near Bourbon Spring where the caretakers for the Gage cattle lived. This may have been built by Carver. It was just north and east of the spring and partly down the bank. The lower part comprised the kitchen, dining room, and living room. The sleeping quarters were above on a level with the road. A dinner bell hung in a large nearby

Riverside

tree, and there were two padlocked outhouses toward the river below. There were easy steps down to the spring. The cattle barns were where the Green Block is now, and the cattle were driven down to the river west of the town hall for water.

There were several islands in the river. Carver's Island was just above the present town hall, and a large one known as Picnic Island was near Bourbon Spring. Prescott's Flats were south of the river bend toward Ogden Avenue. Prescott owned about all of present Lyons east of Joliet Avenue. His house still stands on Ogden Avenue, Lyons, just east of the Lutheran church.

Gage abandoned the race track mentioned and built a new and more elaborate track with a small grandstand and picturesque timing booths. This new track was located north of Barry Point Road, in the neighborhood of Harlem Avenue, west. He also built a house and elaborate stables on the property now owned by the City of Chicago and used as a nursery. The Gage farm, for five or six years prior to the Chicago fire, was a popular rendezvous for fashionable Chicagoans, who drove the long twelve miles over prairie roads for the races and to enjoy Mr. Gage's hospitality. When the Illinois Central Railroad built its N. W. branch, the house, shorn of its verandas and terraces, was bought by Cornelius Sullivan and moved to its present site on the north side of Riverside Drive at its intersection with Selbourne Road.



FROM AN ATLAS OF WARNER & HIGGINS PUBLISHED IN 1869, SHOWING RIVERSIDE AS COOKVILLE AND THE RAILROAD STATION AS LYONS.

CHAPTER VI

A MODEL SUBURB IS BORN

MOST villages and towns in this country, like Topsy, have "just growed". They owe their origins to a cross-road settlement, a few houses clustered together for protection against the Indians, a drop in the river level permitting the use of water-power, or some similar feature that made community life inviting to an increasing number of families.

Riverside might have grown in that manner. Originally, as this narrative has related, there were several characteristics about this area that made community life attractive. Fortunately there were forces working against the development in the regular manner of communal life along the Des Plaines River. The large land holdings of Stephen Forbes, Dr. Egan and later David A. Gage, all of whom had plans that did not include sub-divisions for village life, saved this territory for the realization of an artist's inspiration, and the fulfillment of a community building business venture that was unique when conceived and, today, still stands as an exceptional example of village planning.

In 1868, a group of eastern business men formed a company to build what, they hoped, would be a very necessary adjunct to the fast-growing city on the shores of Lake Michigan. They recognized the need for a suburb accessible to the City, a place affording home

Riverside

sites where the families of business men could enjoy the freedom and other attractive characteristics of country life.

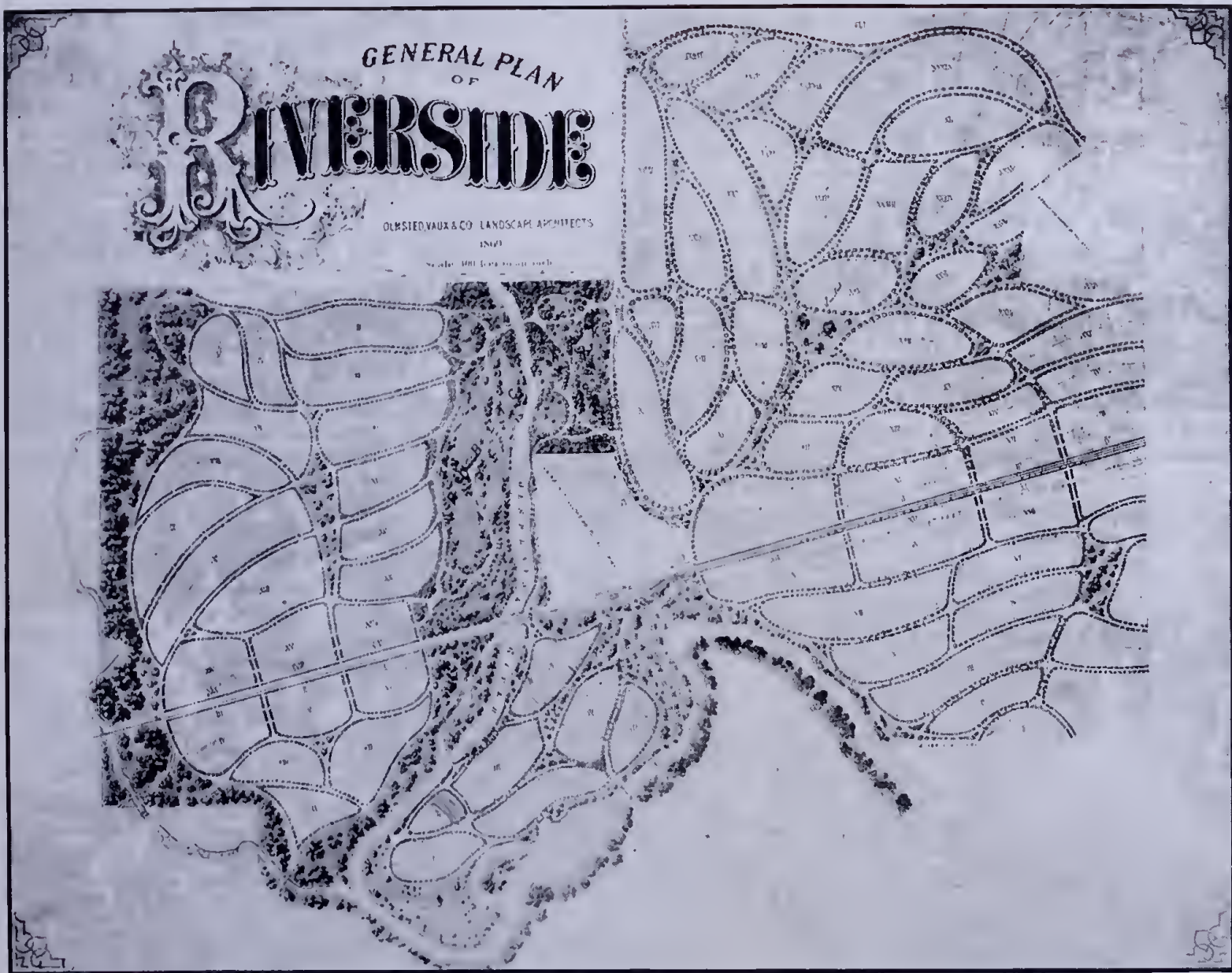
A thorough survey was made of the country around Chicago and the Gage farm, bounded on two sides by the Des Plaines River and dense woods, was selected and purchased, July 25, 1868, by Emery Childs. The Company was incorporated as the Riverside Improvement Company, April 9, 1869, and Mr. Childs transferred to it the 1,600 acres bought from Mr. Gage the previous year. The next step was to procure a landscape architect who would carry out the company's dream of a perfect village in a perfect setting. Present day Riversiders must rejoice in their choice of Frederick Law Olmstead, at that time the most eminent landscape architect in America. He came from the wooded hills of New England to find a flat prairie, with an oasis along the Des Plaines River, covered with elm, oak hickory and walnut trees, and here he set to work to build what would be, for all time, a village in a park.

Villages that "just grow" meet the basic needs of streets, water supply, and parks as the demand for these are urgently made known. Sometimes the need is not felt until the problem to supply it has become too costly to permit satisfying it. That is especially true of recreation areas. Few communities can boast of sufficient park land. Riverside is one of the few.

Olmstead, long before he was employed by the Riverside Improvement Company, had conceived of an ideal suburban village planned with good roads, sufficient park and recreation land, ample water supply, gas for illumination, and a proper sewage system. So, when the *Olmstead, Vaux and Company* survey of the River-



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THE ORIGINAL MAP OF RIVERSIDE PREPARED BY OLNSTEAD, VAUX & COMPANY. THE PARK SYSTEM ALONG THE DESPLAINES RIVER AND SALT CREEK, AND THE ROAD PLAN WEST OF THE RIVER ARE OF PARTICULAR INTEREST.

Then and Now

side Improvement Company's project was made, it included many of Mr. Olmstead's original ideas. The plan submitted to the Improvement Company was enthusiastically accepted. In offering an ideal consummation of a landscape architect's dream, it also afforded the opportunities for profit, in which the backers of the Improvement Company were interested.

An idea of what Olmstead planned may be gleaned from this short excerpt from the prospectus he prepared:

"The Company believes that when their plans are carried out, Riverside will combine the conveniences peculiar to the finest modern towns with the domestic advantages of a most charming country, in a degree never before realized. Every residence site will be at least ten feet above high water in the Des Plaines River. The Company proposes to construct about 40 miles of carriage road, all to be of easy grade, smooth surface, thoroughly drained. Five miles of public walk will be laid out on the river banks; there will be numerous public ball and croquet grounds; the river affords pleasant opportunities for boating, and several bridges, balconies and pavillions will give special advantages for observing regattas and other aquatic sports."

The village was not to be just a suburban town for Chicago people, for its possibility as a summer resort had been kept in mind. The river, to quote again from Mr. Olmstead, "was a clear, sparkling stream that lent itself to fishing, swimming and boating". The wooded acres were filled with wild flowers and ferns, and there were two sulphur springs, which, on being analyzed, proved to have certain health giving qualities. One of these springs was on the present library site. A stone

Riverside

coping is still to be seen, as a marker, in the park where it was put when the library was built. The other spring was on the Gage farm near his last race track. It was covered with a wooden spring house.

Before passing on to the development of the Olmstead ideal suburb, a paragraph or two should be taken to mention that beside Riverside, Mr. Olmstead was the creator of the plans for Central Park, New York; Lincoln Park, Chicago; and Brookline, a suburb that is now a part of Boston, Massachusetts. He was a man of letters as well as an architect and artist of renown. He wrote several books dealing with travel in the southern states and describing conditions of life then relative to slavery.

This love for literature is reflected in the names he chose for many of Riverside's streets. Michaux Road was named after F. Andrew Michaux, and Nuttall Road after Thomas Nuttall. Michaux was sent to this country by the French government to study the trees. Nuttall finished his work. Their books on the subject are exhaustive. Addison Road was named after the English essayist, Joseph Addison who wrote *The Spectator Paper*; Shenstone Road was named for William Shenstone, an English poet; Akenside Road for Mark Akenside who wrote *The Pleasures of the Imagination*; Uvedale Road for a British author; Herbert Road was after George Herbert, an English poet; and Cowley Road after Abraham Cowley, another English poet. Another group of street names were selected because of their historical significance. These include Lawton Road, Gage Road, Olmstead Road, Blackhawk Road, Robinson Court, Forbes Road, and Scottswood Road, all named after characters mentioned in this history. Other roads

Then and Now

were named because of their location or physical characteristics, such as Fairbank Road, Bloomingbank Road, and Long Common Road. Although this last named road very well describes its principal attraction, the long commons, there are a number of Riversiders who are sorry that the old name Barry Point Road was not retained.

To assure the proper development of the resort features planned by the Riverside Improvement Company, one of the first projects was the building of a large hotel.

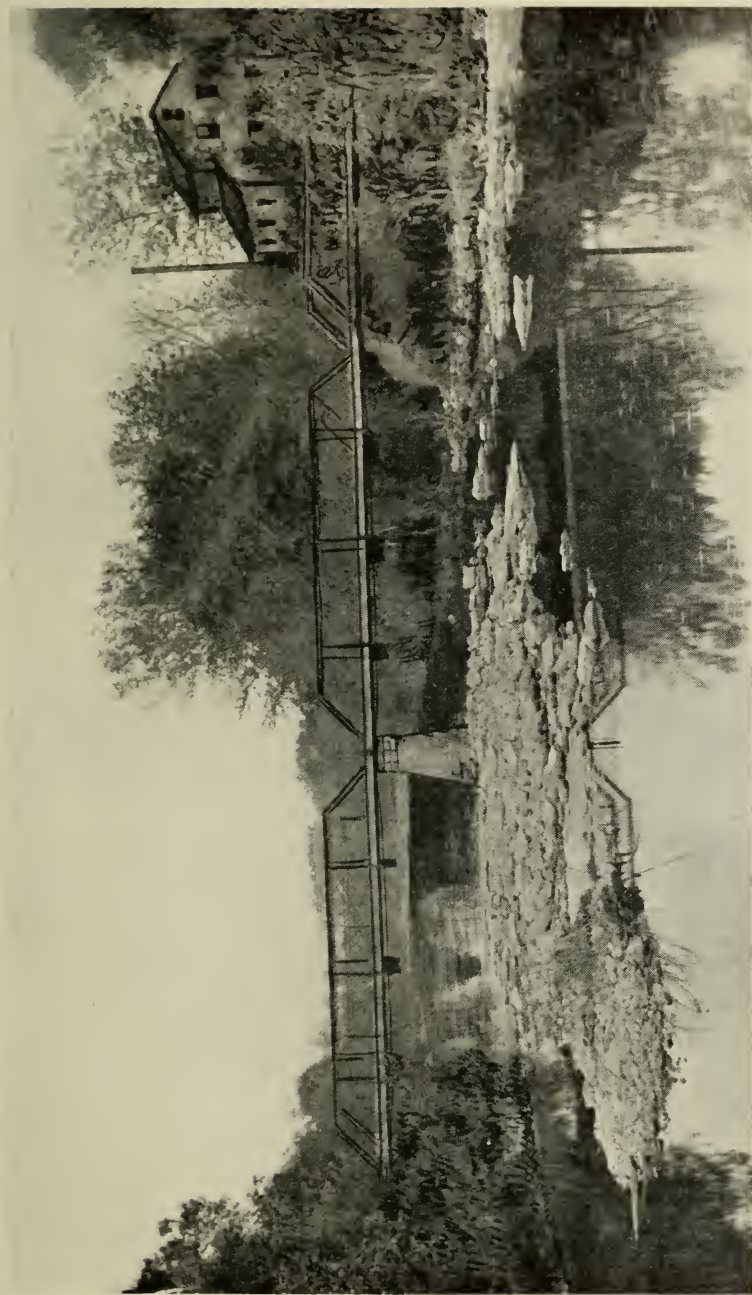
Land on the river bank and across Riverside Road in block X was sold to William T. Allen, Seneca Kimbark, and Henry Seelye for \$30,000 for a hotel site. No account of early Riverside would be complete without a description of the hotel. It was built in the Swiss style and had three separate buildings connected on the second floors by balconies. On the river side was the Refectory containing parlors, card rooms, dining rooms, kitchens, and a large ball room. Next to it was a two-story chalet with billiard room and bar. On the north side of the road was an E-shaped building containing 124 bed rooms, all light and airy with open fire places and running water in each one. Just in front of the Refectory building, the balcony widened into a circular pavillion for band music. It was ready for occupancy and completely filled in the spring of 1870. H. M. Kinsley, probably one of the best known American restaurateurs of that time, was installed as manager. An Italian band of many pieces played every afternoon and evening in the pavillion, and for the weekly balls special trains brought fashionable Chicagoans who were not fortunate enough to be living here. To dine with Mr. Kinsley, or to dance to the Italian band, or to sit in shaded balconies over a sparkling

Riverside

river, or to drive over the new-made roads through woods and parks were society's diversion that summer of 1870.

The first church building was erected by the Riverside Improvement Company to be used as a union church. For the first years of the village's existence, Presbyterians and Episcopalians shared it, alternating their services.

Late in 1869 Ezra L. Sherman built the house on Block VII still standing. His property, like many others, was a large one, comprising all the southwest half of that block. Two other houses were built in that block, one next to Mr. Sherman's built by H. C. Ford, a well-known artist of his time, and one, on the corner built by the Company for John Dore, the contractor for most of the buildings. On a lot south of the church, George M. Kimbark built his home, and just west of the church E. T. Wright built and sold to Gurdon S. Hubbard Jr. a house planned by Olmstead and Vaux. The next lot was owned and built on by E. F. Nexsen. Beyond the Nexsen property were dense woods for many years, the other houses in that division being nearer the river, on Scottswood and Bloomingbank Roads. The Improvement Company built two large houses on Bloomingbank Road, on either side of Coonley Road, both of which have been torn down to make room for modern ones. The two houses on the east end of the block were in the course of erection in 1870. The larger one, on the corner now owned by Thomas C. Blayney, was built by John A. Rice, owner at that time of the Sherman Hotel, and later of the Tremont House. Mr. Rice incurred much enmity in the village by placing a fence around his property. Olmstead had suggested in his prospectus that home owners "should leave all lot lines unmarked by



THE PHOTOGRAPHER WHO TOOK THIS PICTURE STOOD AT THE HOFMANN DAM AND POINTED HIS CAMERA TOWARD THE EAST, SHOWING THE OLD RIVERSIDE-LYONS BRIDGE, AND TO THE RIGHT THE OLD STONE MILL BUILT BY DOCTOR FOX.



THIS LOG CABIN WAS IDENTIFIED AS HAVING BEEN LOCATED IN RIVERSIDE NEAR THE RIVER BANK.



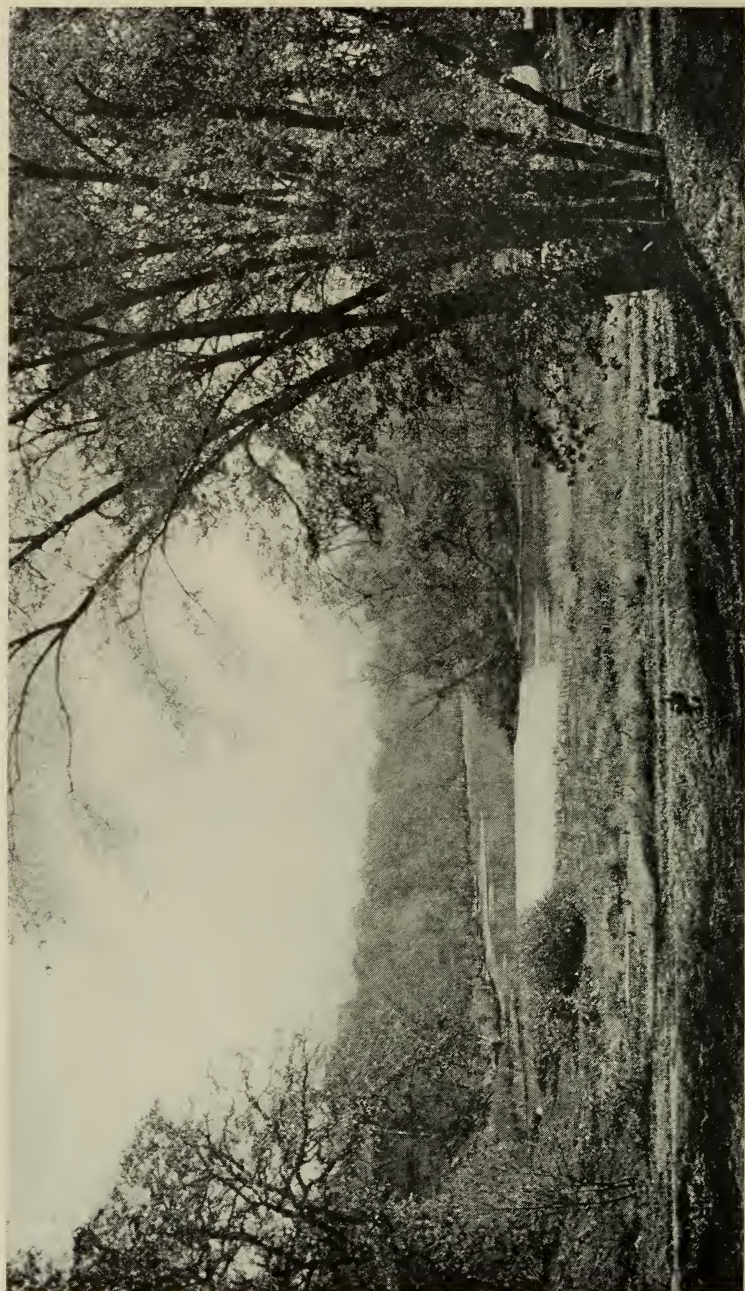
RUINS OF MUELLER'S BREWERY PROVIDED TUNNELS AND HIDE-OUTS FOR CHILDREN UNTIL THE 1920's.



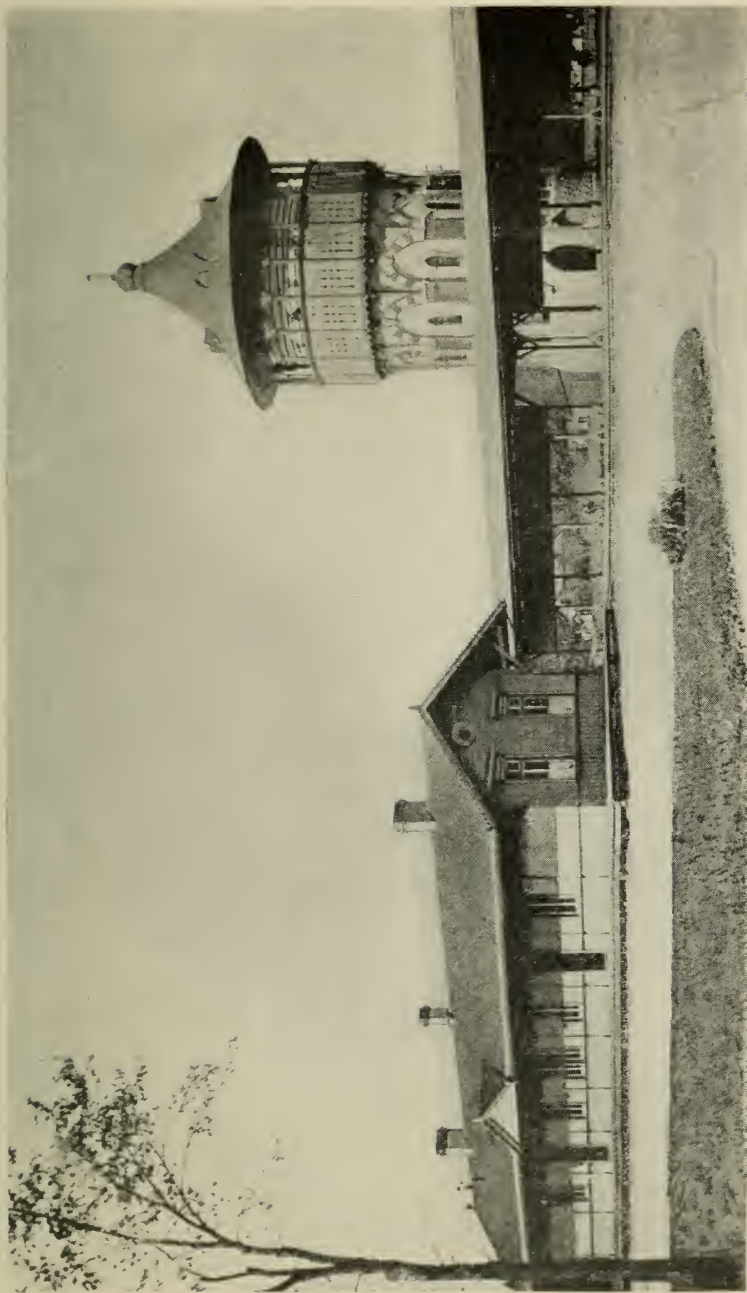
THE CENTRAL GRAMMAR SCHOOL FIRST UNIT, SHOWN ABOVE, WAS BUILT IN 1897.



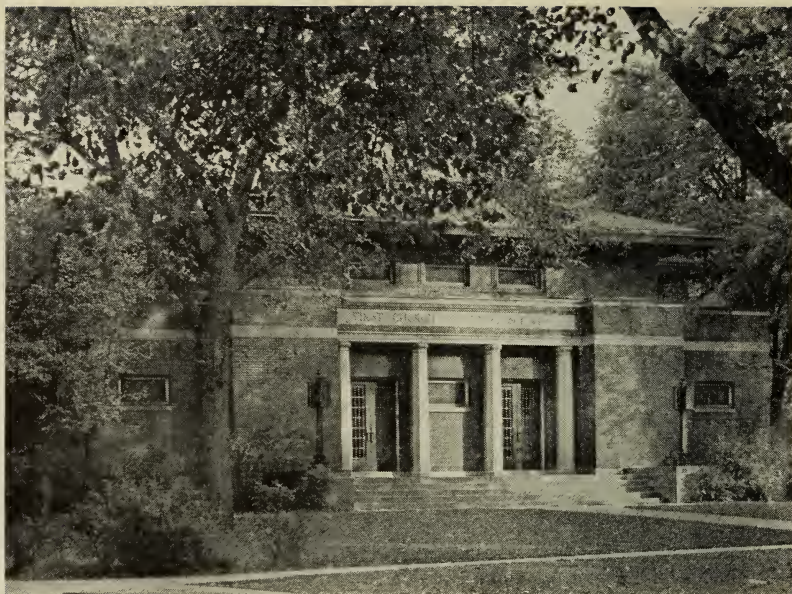
THE RIVERSIDE METHODIST CHURCH HAS BEEN REMODELED SEVERAL TIMES, BUT NOT EXTENSIVELY, SINCE 1901.



DOWN STREAM FROM BOURBON SPRINGS PRESENTED A SCENIC VIEW IN THE 1880's WHEN THIS PICTURE WAS TAKEN. THE HEAVILY WOODED RIVER BANKS REMAIN AN ATTRACTION TODAY.



QUITE DIFFERENT THAN 1936 IS THIS 1890 VIEW OF RIVERSIDE'S DEPOT AND THE WATER TOWER. THE OLD DEPOT IS NOW A FREIGHT HOUSE, AND THE TOWER HAS A NEW TOP REPLACING THE ONE PICTURED HERE AND DESTROYED BY FIRE NEW YEAR'S EVE 1913.



FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST, OF RIVERSIDE WAS DEDICATED JANUARY 5, 1936. IT WAS BUILT IN 1920.



BOY SCOUT CABIN AT INDIAN GARDENS STANDS GUARD OVER THE BONES OF LONG DEPARTED NATIVES.



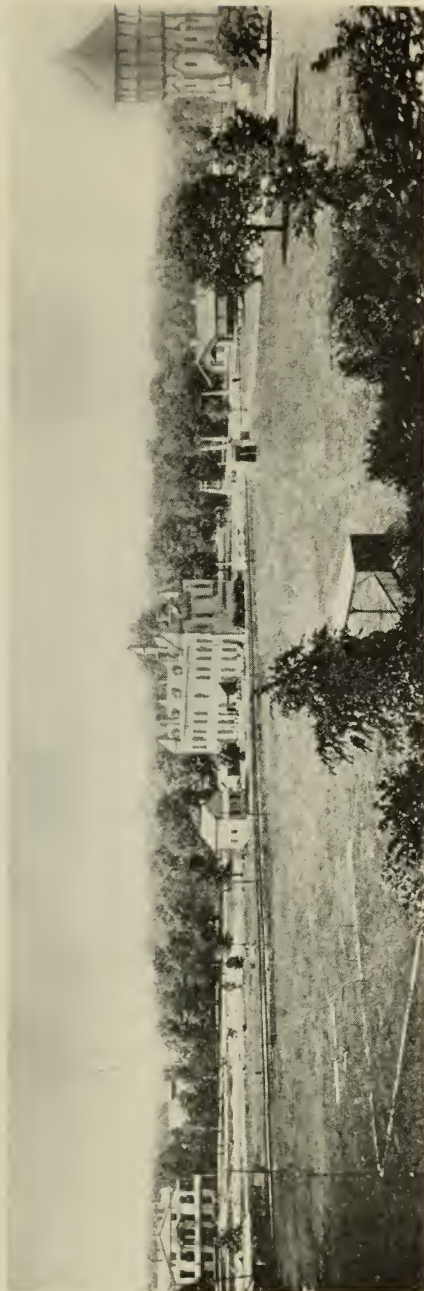
STANDING ON THE BROW OF SWAN POND HILL TODAY'S CHILDREN VIEW THE HISTORIC AREA THAT INCLUDES BOURBON SPRINGS, INDIAN FORD, AND THE RIVER BANK APPROACH TO LAUGHTON'S TAVERN AND THE FORBES' HOME.



RIVERSIDE HAD ITS SUSPENSION BRIDGE LONG BEFORE BROOKLYN BRIDGE WAS BUILT.



HIGH-WHEEL BICYCLES, TANDEM AND MANY ANOTHER MODEL OF BICYCLE PASSED OVER THIS BRIDGE WHICH WAS ON THE WAY TO THE GOLF CLUB IN THE LATE '90's.



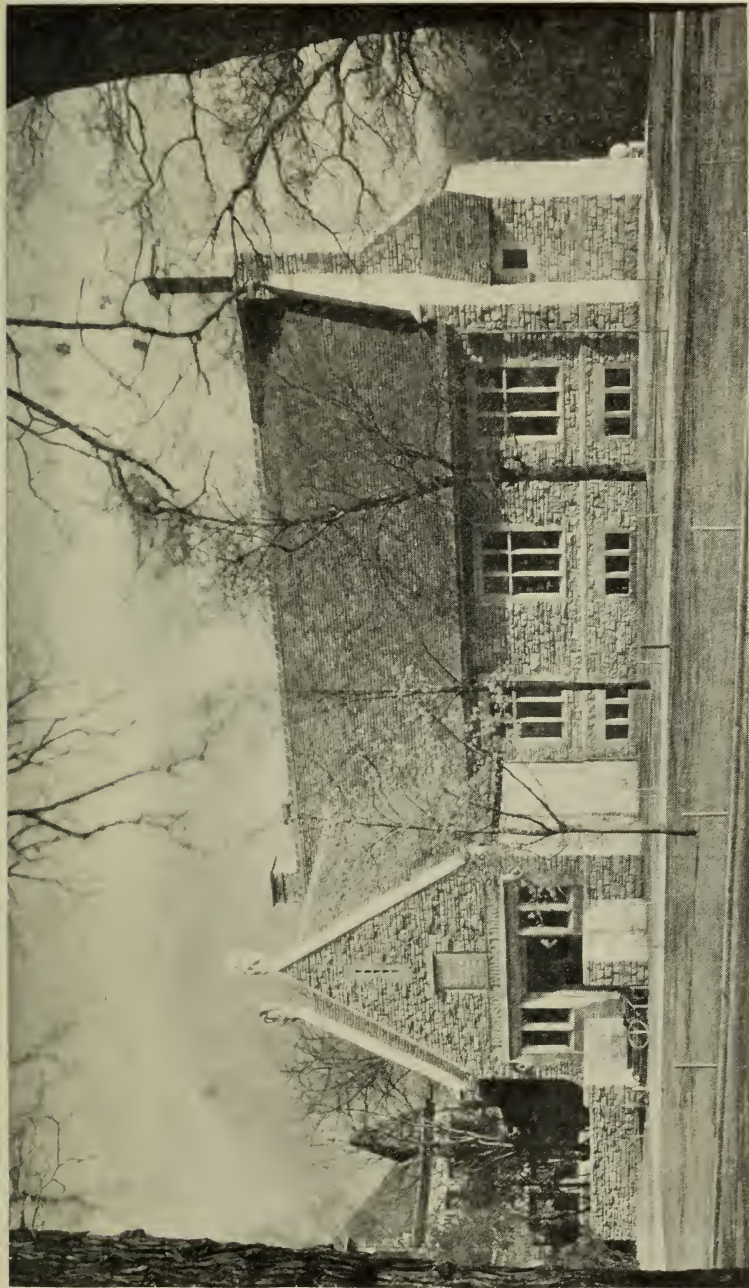
ABOVE—AN OLD VIEW OF THE DAM WHEN BOATING AND FISHING WERE POPULAR PASTIMES.
BELOW—A PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE BUSINESS DISTRICT IN THE 1890's.



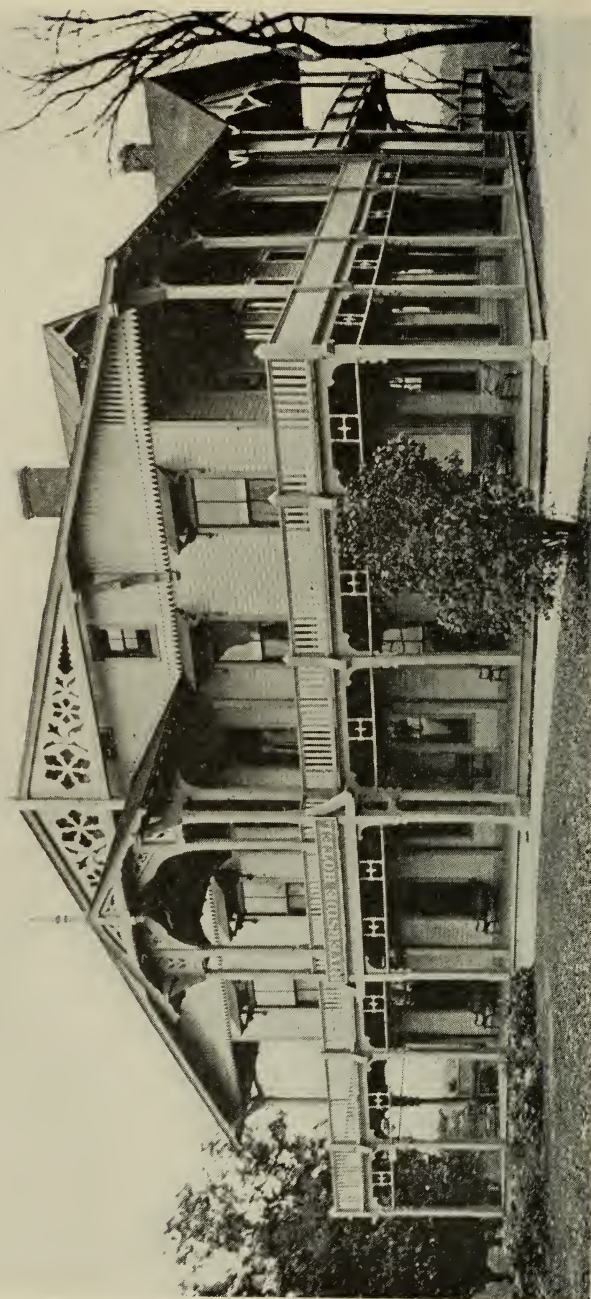
IN 1924 THE A. F. AMES SCHOOL WAS OPENED FOR BOYS AND GIRLS UP TO THE FIFTH GRADE.



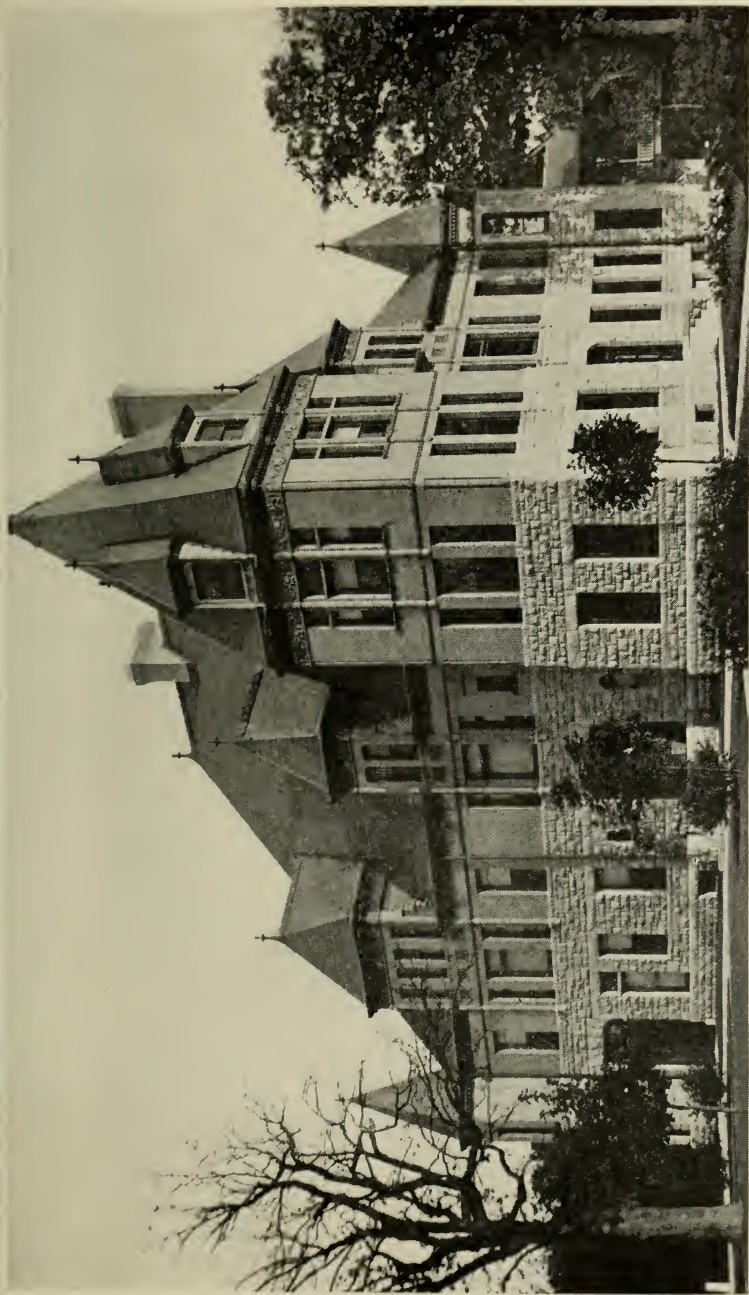
CENTRAL SCHOOL'S CIRCULAR DOORWAY WAS DESIGNED BY ARCHITECT C. F. WHITTLESEY.



AS PROOF THAT RIVERSIDE RETAINS OLMSTEAD'S ORIGINAL HIGH IDEALS OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT THE VILLAGE EXHIBITS THE LIBRARY BUILDING.



THE REFECTORY BUILDING, PICTURED ABOVE, WAS CONVERTED INTO A HOTEL BY CHARLES MAY. IT WAS USED FOR THAT PURPOSE AS LATE AS 1920. NOW IS RESIDENCE OF MRS. E. A. FERGUSON.



THE RIVERSIDE TOWN HALL WAS BUILT IN 1895 WHILE FRANK FREDERICKS WAS TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR. IT REMAINS TODAY MUCH AS IT WAS ORIGINALLY.



FROM 1888 UNTIL 1930 ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH APPEARED AS ABOVE. NOTE THE CARRIAGE ENTRANCE.



WHEN ST. PAUL'S CHURCH WAS REMODELED IN 1930, THE STEEPLE WAS REBUILT IN ENGLISH ARCHITECTURE STYLE.



MAIN READING AND REFERENCE ROOM OF RIVERSIDE'S
ATTRACTIVE PUBLIC LIBRARY.



IN 1884 THIS SCHOOL BUILDING WAS OPENED. IT BURNED DOWN THE NIGHT OF SEPTEMBER 3, 1896.



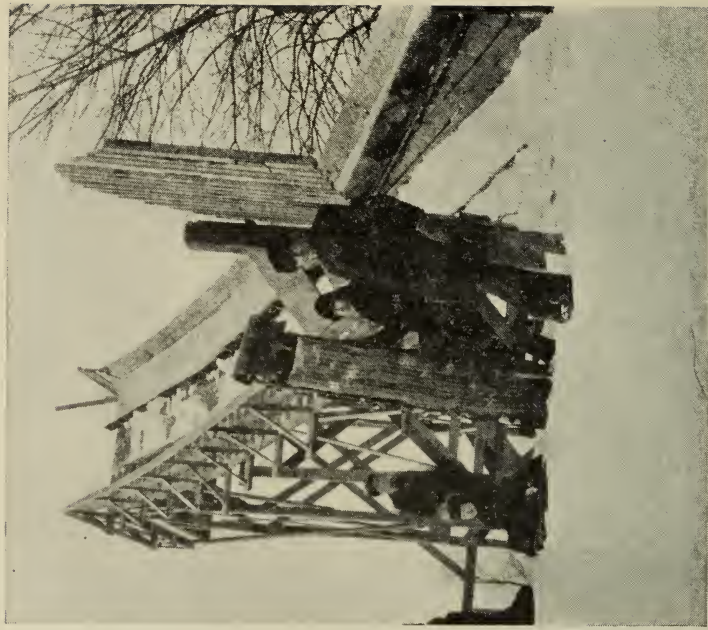
DRIVER BLOCK WAS THE SECOND BUSINESS BUILDING IN RIVERSIDE. APPEARANCE HAS CHANGED LITTLE SINCE 1900.



THE SECOND SOCIAL ERA IN RIVERSIDE ARRIVED WITH THE ORGANIZATION OF THE RIVERSIDE GOLF CLUB. SCENES SUCH AS PICTURED ABOVE WERE COMMON AT THE CLUB IN THE '90'S.



BICYCLE PATH THROUGH KIMBARK'S WOODS
WAS A ROMANTIC SPOT IN RIVERSIDE'S
EARLY DAYS.



TOBOGGANING WAS A FAVORITE WINTER
SPORT THIRTY YEARS AGO. THIS SLIDE WAS
ON TOP THE SWAN POND HILL.



RIVERSIDE-BROOKFIELD HIGH SCHOOL HAS 950 PUPILS ENROLLED FOR FALL OF 1936. THERE ARE 33 MEMBERS ON THE FACULTY.



FROM 1889 UNTIL 1897 THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH APPEARED AS ABOVE.



IN 1928 A COMMUNITY HOUSE WAS ADDED TO THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.



HOFMANN TOWER AND THE ICE-COATED DES PLAINES RIVER AND DAM IN THE WINTER OF 1935-36.



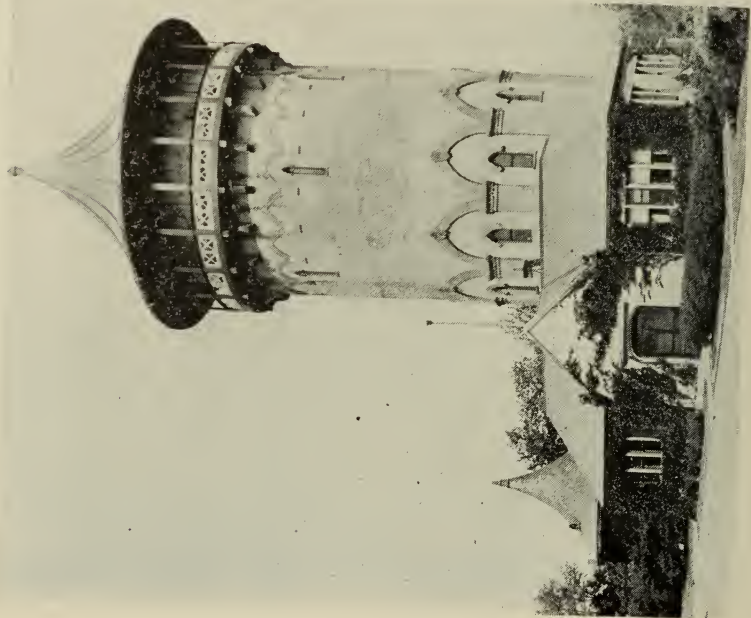
BUILT IN 1901, THIS CHURCH SATISFIED ST. MARY'S PARISH UNTIL THE NEW CHURCH WAS ERECTED IN 1926.



ST. MARY'S PARISH DEDICATED THIS COMBINED CHURCH AND SCHOOL IN 1926.



INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL, ERECTED IN 1929, WAS DESIGNED TO FIT MODERN EDUCATIONAL TRENDS
AS OUTLINED BY THE LATE SUPT. A. F. AMES.



THE WATER TOWER REMAINS TODAY, AS IN 1870, RIVERSIDE'S MUCH PICTURED TRADEMARK.



WINTER ENHANCES THE BEAUTIES OF RIVERSIDE'S 134 ACRES OF PARKS.

Then and Now

hedges or fences, thus ensuring a park like appearance to the village." The other house on that block, the next lot west of the Rice house, was built for the Rev. James H. Trowbridge, who was the first minister of the Presbyterian church. On Block IV only two houses were built at that time: one facing the river and owned and occupied for many years by Thomas W. Blayney and his family, and the other, again in the Swiss chalet style, on Scottswood Road, built by L. Y. Schermerhorn, who came here with the Improvement Company as architect and engineer in charge of public works. This is now occupied by Mrs. John Bryant and her son, Howard.

In the second division east of the hotel, William T. Allen built on an extensive piece of property. The house still stands, occupied by the Sherman sisters, but the land has been subdivided and gardens and orchards and pastures have become home-sites. Near the middle of the same block, on Gage Road, the Company built a frame house for the men working on the construction of the village and another one on Lawton Road for the same purpose. Both of these houses remain and are occupied. On the west end of Block V, Mr. Seelye built on property like Mr. Allen's but this house was torn down in 1935.

In the third division, at the extreme east end of the village, Emery Childs, the President of the Improvement Company, built, what was considered at that time, a very beautiful house. The rooms were large and completely finished in fine black walnut. Exquisite marble mantles were brought from Italy. At the north end, a billiard room 25 feet square, with hooded fire places and high walnut seats, added charm to the house. Gardens were laid out with fountains, and marble balustrades, and shaded walks. Much of the social life of the village

Riverside

centered there. The house was torn down to be replaced by Henry Babson's residence. Leverett W. Murray and W. L. B. Jenny built the same year, on Block XVII, facing Nuttall Road. The Murray house still stands; the Jenny house was burned. Across the park on north Long Common two large houses were erected on adjoining lots. One burned about 1900, the other is owned and occupied by Schofield Gross. On that same block, the house owned by George M. Silverthorne was built by Carol Gates, the first President of the Village Board. On Michaux Road seven large houses were built, two of brick and the rest following the general style of frame construction. A fine frame house was built by the Improvement Company, in Block 17, facing Nuttall Road. It was sold at auction in 1871 to George M. Chambers, who occupied it until his residence on Michaux Road was completed. It burned later. The original homes on Michaux Road still standing are: the one now owned by Mrs. Schuyler Coe, the Seckel house, the Mundy house, now owned by H. A. Rowland, and the brick house, now occupied by William Faurot. The Chambers house belongs to L. L. Dent. On Herrick Road, Telford Burnham built a house in the Italian style, which he sold to Edward A. Driver, who, for many years, was an honored and useful citizen of the village, building in the early 80's the bank building known as the Driver block. J. C. Cochran built, west of Mr. Burnham, the house now occupied by the Charles Lindquist's.

Frederick Law Olmstead, J. C. Cochran and W. L. B. Jenny were the architects for all these first buildings, Mr. Jenny doing most of the work. He came into the Improvement Company soon after being mustered out of the Union Army, where he had served with distinc-

Then and Now

tion in Sherman's Division. One of his great achievements in the architectural field was the Home Insurance Building in Chicago where, for the first time, steel was used in building construction.

The public buildings, the water tower, streets, and gas works were built under the direction of Mr. Schermerhorn and intended to carry out, in style, the plan of Olmstead. One artesian well supplied the village with excellent water—later as the village grew other wells had to be added. Two small towers, one of which was used for a postoffice, were built in the late '90's. An old Riversider returning to the village after a long absence, declared that it appeared the water tower had acquired twins. On New Year's Eve 1913, what seemed an utter impossibility happened. The water tower burned. When rebuilt its height was greater than it had been.

Provision for a business district had been included in Mr. Olmstead's plans, and one of the first buildings erected was the business block, erected by the Improvement Company itself in 1871, in Block XIII on Riverside Road, next to the railroad tracks. It originally contained but two stores, a drug store combined with a post-office at one end, and a grocery and market at the other end. This block later came to be known as the Green Block because Hetty Green acquired it on a mortgage when the crash came. More about this financial upset will be related later.

The Wesencraft property, and the section between Forest Avenue and the present street car tracks on Park Road, and west of Woodside Road to the river, were not a part of the Riverside Improvement Company's plan. James Reynolds bought this strip of land, subdivided it on the familiar rectangular lines and built a

Riverside

few cottages on it. For many years this addition to the village was known as "Jim Town."

North of the present Maplewood sub-division was a wooded area known as Kimbark Woods. A dirt road wound through it under the old walnut and butter-nut trees, and there the Sunday School picnics were held. In the fall the children went there to gather the winter's supply of walnuts, hazel-nuts, butter-nuts, and hickory nuts.

And so we find a village conceived in 1869 and finished and occupied in 1871. For, though the houses were few in number, the hotel was full to overflowing with people who dreaded the coming of fall and the return to city life. Charles Nordhoff, of the New York Evening Post, wrote that summer :

"It must have been some citizens who had been galled by the inconveniences of country life who conceived the thought of contriving near Chicago, a suburb with every city convenience. I had heard of Riverside as one of the curiosities of the west, and now I have seen it, and, loving the country, I wish sincerely that Chicago were New York, or that the Riverside Improvement Company had favored our vicinity with their enterprise and skill. This is no job, no 'great public work'; there are no politics in it. It is a commercial adventure, conceived in a vivid spirit and admirably carried out."

Then on October 9, 1871, Chicago was destroyed by fire, and disaster in the city was a boon to Riverside, for the homeless had to be housed and fed. The hotel stayed open all winter and the people who were settled in their new houses stretched the capacity of every house to take in the homeless. All winter, after the first awful shock of disaster, Riverside was filled with gaiety. Many

Then and Now

of the people who found refuge here lost everything they owned, even to necessary clothing, and so, at the balls in the hotel, and at the evening parties in the private homes, one could see every sort of gown, from the bride's Paris model to one made of calico purchased at a country store. Often the parties were impromptu, and a huge "carry all" would be sent from house to house to gather the villagers for a small dance at Mr. Childs, or games and supper at Mr. Sherman's.

H. M. Kinsley continued to serve his marvelous food at the hotel and if game was needed to vary the menus, plenty could be procured from nearby prairies or from river and creek. Prairie chicken, snipe, quail, pigeons, and plover were plentiful and ducks and wild geese in season. "Old Gabel," a character of Lyons, appeared at one's kitchen door every Sunday morning with his leaf-lined basket filled with perch and sun-fish caught in the early morning hours. "Old Gabel" told Mr. T. C. Blayney that his first wife had been buried under a window of Mr. Blayney's father's home in Block IV.

J. C. Smith built an ice-house near the present C. B. and Q. railroad bridge. There was another ice-house on the Lyons side of the river just above the dam. Ice from the Des Plaines River was used for domestic purposes, locally and also in Chicago. The Des Plaines at that time was considered so pure that, before the deep well was completed, water was hauled in barrels from the river for drinking and other household purposes.

It seemed as if Riverside had arrived and would continue to grow and be, to its sponsors, what they had dreamed of, a village of beauty, a haven of rest for the tired business man, and a paying investment on \$1,500,-

Riverside

ooo of capital used in its making, but they had not reckoned on the great panics that swept the country after the Chicago fire, nor on the ugly rumor circulated by envious real estate men that the new suburb was filled with malaria. There were a few isolated cases of this disease, seemingly caused by so much freshly turned earth, but few as they were, they were enough to scare prospective property owners to other fields.

In 1873 the Improvement Company failed. Land values dropped from \$300 a front foot to \$40. Company building restrictions no longer were in force. Building continued to some extent by men who still had faith in nature's resources. Mr. Kinsley kept the hotel running successfully for a few years, but most of the men who had come west to put their money, their time and their hearts, into the building of a model village, returned to their eastern homes. William T. Allen, Henry Seelye, and Leverett W. Murray were the only ones of the Company who with their families remained. Mr. Childs sold his large house to General Bates who, with his family, kept up its reputation for hospitality. Mr. Murray sold to William A. Havemeyer. Charles D. Sherman acquired the Nexson property and later Arthur M. Kinzie, a son of Juliette Kinzie, whose description of a night spent at Lawton's in the Aux Plains has been previously mentioned, lived in the same house.

The township of Riverside was organized September 24, 1870; it consisted of Sections 25, 26, 35 and 36, detached from the southeast corner of Proviso Township.

The first officers were: Thomas Wright, Supervisor; Joseph S. Ditto, Assessor; J. H. Best, Clerk; T. G. Kinsman, Collector; Fox, L. Y. Schermerhorn, and A. Egerton, Commissioners of Highways; C. G.

Then and Now

Case and S. R. Cole, Justices; W. P. Harris and George Wiggs, Constables.

In the late 1890's, Oak Park Township and Berwyn Township were both detached from Cicero Township. An effort was made, at that time, to attach Riverside to one of either of these new townships. John M. Cameron represented Riverside Township before the County Board and succeeded in defeating these moves.

On June 25, 1875, the Cook County Court was petitioned to organize the Village of Riverside by the following:

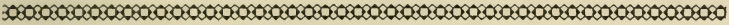
Carol Gates, William T. Allen, E. F. Nexsen, George Gilbert, H. F. Jennison, D. F. Chase, George Chambers, Gurdon Hubbard Jr., George M. Kimbark, E. F. Hollester, John Gage, Leopold Koehner, Patrick Ronan, E. R. Teale, A. J. Cross, George Coryell, W. R. Haven, Geo. N. Loomis, Frank Neher, J. H. Trowbridge, L. W. Murray, J. F. Van Slyke, T. T. Menfred, J. C. Cochran, Ed. Seckel, Chas. D. Sherman, Ezra L. Sherman, G. Collis, John Davison, John Holden, C. H. Smith, B. R. Shotwell, James Reynolds, W. L. B. Jenny.

An election was held August 8, 1875, at the railroad depot, 29 votes being polled. Carol Gates was elected first president and the trustees were Ezra L. Sherman, H. E. Seelye, George Chambers, George Gilbert and John Cochran. The pound master, Patrick Ronan, held the most remunerative and perhaps the most important appointive office.

The village grew very slowly in those years, from 29 votes polled in that first election to about 800 in 1900, but it completely satisfied those who had come here because it was small and quiet and healthful. Failures

Riverside

and panics could not take from it its good water, good sanitation, or its lovely parks which, by the dedications made in the original plats of subdivision, had been protected for all time. At one time, a group of people, new to the village, and not having as yet acquired its traditions and feeling that the taxes were excessive, proposed to cut some of the larger parks into building lots, but, fortunately, the dedications were held to be permanent grants to the public.



CHAPTER VII

THE CENTURY CLOSES

IN THIS year that marks the end of one century and the beginning of another for community life on the banks of the Des Plaines River at Belle Fontaine, now Riverside, it is fitting that some sort of inventory be taken.

In an article titled "Riverside Sixty Years Later" and published in "Landscape Architecture" in January 1932, the following comment is made:

"Riverside proves the words of Burnham, that 'a noble, logical diagram once recorded will never die, but long after we are gone will be a living thing, asserting itself with ever-growing insistency'. There have been many opportunities for the ideals of Frederick Law Olmstead, as incorporated in his plan of 1869, to 'go by the board'. Yet a comparison of his proposed plan with that of present day Riverside will demonstrate that his plan has been carried out in astonishing detail Although Riverside has been without the advantages of stringent private-deed restrictions and architectural control, as we know them today, yet the provisions of adequate open spaces, the setting of houses well back from the streets among trees and shrubs, and the consequent attraction of people with good taste and community pride, have accomplished much the same result . . . How

Riverside

many of our present-day developments, assailed by as powerful disrupting forces as those which have been attacking this Chicago suburb, are so planned that they can maintain their original character and identity for sixty years?"

It is that high character, that distinctive identity, plus the exceptional type of citizenship that has chosen this community as a home that has drawn an ever increasing number of new residents to Riverside. During the past thirty years the growth of this village has kept pace with that of other high class suburbs in the Chicago metropolitan area, and an exceptionally large number of prominent men and women have made their homes here.

In its earliest years H. C. Ford and Anne Shaw lived here, attracting many other artists whose easels and umbrellas were common sights along the river banks. Later Isham Randolph and General Sooy Smith, engineers of nationwide renown, made their homes here. Edward P. Ripley bought the house on Michaux Road now occupied by his daughter, Mrs. Coe. Mr. and Mrs. Ripley came to Riverside on their wedding trip when Chicago was in flames and said if business ever brought them west to make a home, Riverside would be their choice. Mr. Ripley came west to be an official of the C. B. & Q. Railroad and later was made President of the Santa Fe Railroad. William A. Havemeyer bought the Murray house on Nuttall Road, and in 1893 organized the Riverside Golf Club when golf was new even in eastern resorts. The club is second in age in the middle west and might have been first if the group of men who with Mr. Havemeyer started it had thought of incorporation before Belmont started. Ring W. Lardner, whose brilliant career was all too short-lived, built on Herrick Road almost next door to

Then and Now

Clare Briggs, the cartoonist, whose "Oh Skinnay" made a national fame. William J. Campbell, Lieutenant Governor of Illinois in 1880, raised his family here. Mrs. George W. Gould and Mrs. H. E. Havemeyer, Riverside residents, are descendants of the Kinzie family.

As the Des Plaines River is a most important unit of Riverside some remarks regarding it must be included in this account of the village.

Olmstead in his original survey for the Riverside Improvement Company said :

"The water of the river is said to be ordinarily very clear, and we found it tolerably so after a heavy rain, which is remarkable in a prairie stream. It abounds with fish and wild fowl, is adapted to pleasure boating, and can be improved in this respect. In parts, it already presents much beauty, and is everywhere susceptible of being refined and enriched by art to a degree which will render it altogether charming.'

The reader will remember that mention was made in a previous part of this narrative of using Des Plaines River water for drinking, and of cutting ice for domestic use both in the village and in the City of Chicago.

Historians of the future have plenty of material available in the files of current newspapers and the minutes of Riverside Village Board proceedings to tell the story of how the Des Plaines River has been defiled by man. The story of pollution by up-streams villages and the long fight by Riverside residents and others to restore the river to its original condition is covered by many columns of news stories and by the correspondence files and minutes of the Chicago Sanitary District. The conclusion of this anti-pollution activity is a happy one and very appropriately, in this 100th year of Riverside, the

Riverside

end of a sewage laden river is in sight. Construction of suitable intercepting sewers will take out of the river, sewage from all communities along the river as far north as the Village of Des Plaines. The final project to restore the river, that of separate storm and sanitary sewer systems, has already been started by some of the villages along the river.

Again reference is made to Olmstead's original survey of this area, and he is quoted as follows:

"We nowhere found, even among the bushes near the water, on a warm evening, any mosquitoes or lake flies, though both were at the time annoying the people of Chicago. We were assured by residents of the neighborhood that they were never annoyed by them, and also that no fever and ague, or other malarial disease has been known for years in the vicinity."

How inconsistent, later, was the false rumour that fever and malaria were common in Riverside. This rumour, it is now known, was circulated by promoters of real estate sales in other communities. The prevalence of mosquitoes at a later time was not inconsistent. There again Riverside was the victim of man-made conditions that encouraged mosquito breeding. The polluted river, uncompleted real estate projects that created artificial pools, refuse dumps and similar ideal breeding areas throughout the whole suburban district gave mosquitoes ample opportunity to multiply.

Riversiders again took a leading part in agitating for a movement that benefited other communities as well as Riverside. First, through donated funds, and later through the organization of the tax supported Des Plaines Valley Mosquito Abatement District, a mosquito

Then and Now

eradication program has been carried on that has practically eliminated the mosquito as a nuisance.

Standing on the threshold of a new century, Riverside today faces some serious problems. The history of the past indicates, however, that they will be solved in a manner that will assure a continued development of the original ideals conceived by Frederick Law Olmstead and the Riverside Improvement Company.

One of Riversides greatest assets has been, and still is, the high calibre of its citizens. Local government has been and continues to be under the control of civic-minded business and professional men who are practically conscripted to serve their term as village trustees, village president, school board member, or official in some other governmental unit. These men, and women, give their valuable time without compensation other than the dubious satisfaction they derive from solving civic problems. Easily available to Riversiders, beside their own 134 acres of park land, are hundreds of acres of Cook County Forest Preserve, some of which lie within the village limits; the Chicago Zoological Park destined to become the world's greatest zoo, also partly in Riverside; and many main highways.

These above mentioned benefits are also disrupting forces for they bring into the community or along its borders millions of visitors every year. The future of Riverside will depend to a great extent upon what control is placed upon these outside influences. They cannot be ignored in any plan for future development.

CHAPTER VIII

VILLAGE INSTITUTIONS

HISTORICAL STATEMENT RIVERSIDE METHODIST CHURCH

THE Riverside Methodist Church was organized on January 6, 1895 with the Reverend Gilbert D. Cleworth as pastor of the following charter members:

Mr. Philander F. Chase	Miss Elizabeth Schaber
Mr. E. Dudley Chase	Miss Eva Goodwin
Mr. O. E. Anderson	Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Saxe
Miss Christine V. Crowe	Mrs. Emma Sullivan
Mr. and Mrs. D. S. M. Unger	

Previous to the formal organization some 45 persons had indicated their interest in the forming of a Methodist society.

The first meeting place of the church was a hall over the drug store in the Green block. This hall was leased by a whist club who used it two nights a week and agreed to let the Methodists use it Sundays for \$15 a month. It was later discovered that this was the full amount of rent paid by the whist club, who thus proved themselves wiser in the things of this world than the Methodists! This rental proved a heavy burden and soon the Village

Then and Now

Board granted permission to meet in the old Town Hall.

In writing of those early days, Mr. E. J. Saxe recalls: "It was the privilege of the Official Board to get up early Sunday morning and shovel the snow from the path to the road, build a fire in a cracked cast-iron stove and sweep out the litter from a Saturday night board meeting. The smell of stale tobacco was seldom very noticeable, because the soft coal from the old cracked stove was the most noticeable odor. It was a cold and draughty place, and if by chance it did get warm, then the snow on the roof melted and dropped on the heads below."

In 1900, during the pastorate of the Reverend F. C. Taylor, the congregation began talking about building a church. The church records contain many interesting entries of the gifts, large and small, which made the first building possible. One such entry reports 50 cents in stamps. Another is a gift of \$10 from the Catholic priest. In securing title to the property which the church still occupies, it is recorded that a quit claim deed was secured from Mr. John D. Rockefeller for \$50. On June 30, 1901, the church was dedicated by Bishop Merrill. The Reverend Mr. Taylor says of this occasion that he remembers only two things—Bishop Merrill rebuked him for opening the service with the Doxology, which the Bishop said was "too Presbyterian," and the day was oppressively hot.

With the growth of the community and congregation, the plant and facilities of the church have been enlarged several times. In 1906 a parsonage was built, adjoining the original church structure at the south. In 1923 the sanctuary was extended to the north and a second story was added over part of the original building for additional Sunday School room. At the same time

Riverside

a pipe organ was installed. In 1929 it was necessary to take over the old parsonage for the use of the Sunday School and in 1930 the present parsonage was built upon the south end of the church property.

It may be of interest to those who have been connected with the church at one time or another to append a record of the pastors who have served the congregation. The record follows:

1895-1897	G. D. Cleworth
1897-1899	Walter C. Scott
1899-1901	F. C. Taylor
1901-1903	William C. Cleworth
1903-1904	Richard Morley
1904-1906	C. A. Moore
1906-1908	Charles Lyons
1908-1911	John H. Williams
1911-1913	C. F. Graeser
1913-1916	M. E. Cady
1916-1918	W. L. Ruyle
1918-1924	E. J. Aiken
1924-1926	Frank Hancock
1926-1931	Howard P. Buxton
1931-1932	A. Turley Stephenson
1932-1934	Quincy Wright
1934-1935	Carl D. Gage
1936-	John C. Irwin

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

THE Society which is now the Riverside Presbyterian Church existed as a Union church before it became a Presbyterian church. Its organization as a Union church occurred directly after the establishment of the village. For a time, it was the only church in the village. But as the population increased, various denominations believed that they ought to be represented. This left the Union church too weak to maintain itself without organic connection with one of the national denominations. Consequently, on December 15th, 1872, the Society was organized into a Presbyterian church belonging to the Presbytery of Chicago.

The ministers of the church from that date to the present have been: Rev. James H. Trowbridge, 1872-1885; Rev. William C. Clark, 1885-1887; Rev. Frank W. Sneed, 1888-1892; Rev. Charles C. Snyder, 1892-1900; Rev. Herman D. Jenkins, 1900-1913; Rev. Alfred F. Waldo, 1913- . . .

The names of the elders, past and present, are: H. H. Seelye, Gen. H. E. Bates, J. W. Smith, Watts DeGolyer, Chandler B. Beach, J. W. Halliday, William A. Leonard, Edward D. McDougal, Nelson W. Willard, John E. Gardner, John S. Erskine, William L. Harris, William G. Keefer, Joseph Harrington, Thomas Holt, Herman C. Slocum, A. Linwood Chambers, Warren G. Ferguson, and William J. Malcolmson.

Riverside

Prominent among the early trustees was Wm. T. Allen, father of Mrs. Frank F. Reed recently deceased, and of Harry K. Allen still living in Riverside.

The site upon which the church edifice stands was purchased by the trustees on October 1st, 1878, from the Riverside Improvement Company. On this site stood a Stone Chapel which had been erected by the Improvement Company, and used by the Union church during its existence, and by the Presbyterian church after its organization and until it purchased the property. The lot and the Stone Chapel standing thereupon were both acquired by the trustees of the Riverside Presbyterian Church at a cost of \$2,500.00. On Sunday morning, May 16th, 1879, the Stone Chapel burned to the ground, the cause of the fire being a defective flue.

Immediately after this fire, the principal part of the present church edifice was erected, the stone in the walls of the original stone chapel being used as a part of the material. The architect was John C. Cochrane, Chicago. The building committee was: George Chambers, Watts DeGolyer, Alfred J. Cross, and Rev. James H. Trowbridge. The style of architecture is pure ecclesiastical gothic.

The part of the present building which is between the original structure and the community house was added in 1888-1889. The building committee was: James Soper, Edward P. Ripley, Alfred J. Cross, George Chambers, and Fred Schultz. It conforms in architecture with the principal part of the building.

The Manse, connected with the church edifice on the West, was erected in 1897. The architect was Charles F. Whittlesey, who also at the same time prepared plans for the reconstruction of the sanctuary into the present

Then and Now

arrangement. The style of architecture is English domestic, blending with the gothic of the church edifice. Funds raised for this enterprise exceeded \$12,000.00.

The site upon which the Community House stands was purchased on April 12th, 1922, by the Ladies' Aid Society, at a cost of \$2,500.00, and the deed for it presented to the trustees at the annual congregational meeting April 23rd, 1924.

The Community House was dedicated October 21st, 1928, having cost \$100,000.00. The type of architecture is old English domestic. Though built principally of brick, it is tied in with the stone church edifice by the use of varying quantities of stone. The chairman of the building committee was Joseph Harrington. The work of construction was supervised by Dr. S. S. Fuller, president of the board of trustees.

In 1875, the membership of the church was 24; in 1886, it was 67; in 1889, it was 111; in 1899, it was 165; in 1914, it was 193; and at present, it is 613.

HISTORY OF ST. MARY'S PARISH

THE Parish of St. Mary's, Riverside, was formerly a Mission at Lyons, attended successively by priests from St. Patrick's, Holy Family, and Our Lady of Sorrow's Church in Chicago. It was established in 1873, during the Episcopate of the Fifth Bishop of Chicago, The Most Reverend Thomas Foley, D. D.

Originally it included Clyde, Berwyn, Lyons, Riverside, and Summit. The Church was built at Lyons in the year 1873 by Father A. Venturi of Our Lady of Sorrow's Church, Chicago. He remained as pastor until 1885, when the Reverend Thomas A. Burke was appointed the first resident pastor by the Most Reverend Patrick A. Feehan, D. D., Archbishop of Chicago. Father Burke was succeeded by the Reverend Joseph F. Lamb in 1895. In the year 1901, Father Lamb sold the Church and property in Lyons and built a new church and rectory at the southern extremity of Riverside, The Parish developed gradually under the pastorates of the Reverends P. Gildea, 1906-1910; T. A. O'Brien, 1910-1914; Wm. F. Cahill, 1914-1919; and Thos. R. Shewbridge, 1919-1929. Realizing the inadequacy of the Church to house the Congregation, and the necessity of a school for the children of his parish, Father Shewbridge purchased the present church property and erected the combination Church, School, and Rectory Building on Herrick Road.

The dedicatory ceremonies were held September 12, 1926, with His Eminence George Cardinal Mundelein, D. D., officiating. The title of the new church remained the same as in former years, St. Mary's, because, through

Then and Now

the six decades of its existence, the pastors have held that love, veneration and praise for Christ, the Son made Man, implied also, praise for His Mother, next to the Son the Chief Actor in the tragedy and triumph of the Redemption.

In 1929, the Reverend Thos. F. Fried was appointed Pastor, to succeed Father Shewbridge. Father Fried, prior to his coming to Riverside, had organized St. Christina's Parish in the Mount Greenwood section of Chicago. On May 6th, 1932, the present incumbent, the Reverend H. J. Walsh was appointed pastor of St. Mary's, promoted from a Curacy at Our Lady of Victory Parish, in the northwest section of the city.

HISTORY OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH (Episcopal)

THE history of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Riverside goes back to the winter of 1871-72 when a mission was established under the leadership of The Reverend Charles B. Kelly. The earliest services were held in the old Riverside Hotel and later in the Union Church, which was rented for the purpose from the Riverside Improvement Company.

To the late Mrs. Ezra Sherman, who moved to the village in the Spring of 1870, belongs the honor of bearing the major part of the burden of those early days. Through a period of discouragement, it was mainly through her personal efforts that the work was kept alive.

This continued until 1876 when, owing to removals from the village and lack of support, the services were discontinued. In 1877, however, the work was revived and became known as St. Paul's Mission. A small building, owned by the hotel and situated on the bank of the river just back of the Town Hall, was appropriately furnished and continued to house the services and sessions of the Sunday School during almost the entire Mission period.

The year 1887 was a notable one in the progress of the work for it was in August of that year that St. Paul's became a full-fledged parish. June of the following year saw the completion of the present stone church upon foundations begun in 1883.

Then and Now

A name ever to be remembered in connection with the erection of the church edifice is that of the late Mr. William A. Havemeyer, the first senior warden of the parish, to whose unflagging zeal, the successful completion of the project was largely due.

Since the inception of the parish in 1887, the following men have served in the capacity of church wardens:

Messrs: William A. Havemeyer
Daniel E. Richardson
Norris W. Mundy
George Hargreaves
Isham Randolph
Robert M. Ware
E. Edwards
J. Latham Warren
John M. Cameron
James B. McDougal
George M. Silverthorne
Arthur T. Hellyer

The present senior warden is Col. Robert Isham Randolph and the junior warden is Mr. F. Clayton Brown.

Since the permanent establishment of the work in 1877, St. Paul's has had four priests-in-charge and five rectors.

PRIESTS-IN-CHARGE

The Reverend F. N. Luson	1877-80
The Reverend E. B. Taylor	1880-81
The Reverend W. F. Lewis	1881-84
The Reverend A. P. Greenleaf	1884-87

Riverside

RECTORS

The Reverend J. R. Lloyd	1887-89
The Reverend P. H. Hickman	1889-92
The Reverend G. D. Adams	1893-1907
The Reverend R. O. Cooper	1908-1927

The present rector is The Reverend R. B. Grobb, who assumed charge in January 1927.

During 1930 the church edifice was enlarged and remodeled by the erection of a new chancel and the opening of the east and west transepts. It was also modernized by the addition of a commodious parish house. These alterations and additions, which entailed an expenditure of over sixty thousand dollars, give St. Paul's the distinction of being one of the most beautiful and best equipped churches in the diocese of Chicago.

BRIEF HISTORY OF FIRST CHURCH
OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST,
OF RIVERSIDE, ILLINOIS

ON October 12, 1912; a group of forty-two members of the First Church of Christ, Scientist, of LaGrange, Illinois, living in the neighboring towns of Riverside and Berwyn, petitioned the LaGrange Church to allow the organization of a church in Riverside.

Pursuant to this petition, letters of dismissal were granted by the LaGrange Church and a meeting for the purpose of organizing the Riverside Church was held October 28, 1912.

The first service was held in the Auditorium of the Riverside Town Hall, November 3, 1912. On the same day a Sunday School was formed.

Several weeks later a beautiful, completely equipped Reading Room filling a real need in the village, was opened in the State Bank Building.

The first Building Committee was appointed April 10, 1916, and rendered excellent service, one of the fruits of which was the purchase of the beautiful corner lot on Longcommon and Addison Roads. At this point, the activities of the Committee were suspended on account of the world conflict and it was not until July 10, 1919, that the work was again taken up. At a meeting of the Church members it was voted to resume the earnest, active consideration of church building.

It has been the policy of this church body not to ask

Riverside

pledges for any purpose. This plan was carried over into the building of the church edifice and has continued to this day.

The corner stone was laid early on the morning of August 5, 1920, and the service was held in the new structure on March 11, 1923.

It is the practice of all Christian Science Church congregations not to dedicate their churches until they are fully paid for. The bonded indebtedness of \$50,000 was finally paid off by January 1, 1936 and the dedication was held January 5, 1936.

HISTORY OF RIVERSIDE SCHOOLS

ONE hundred years ago, during the summer of 1836, the first school was held in this community. As has been stated in another chapter, Flavilla Forbes was the first school teacher. Her picture is being presented to the school and village library by members of the Forbes family.

For a few years previous to 1871, a private school was conducted in the small northeast room of the Green Block. At this time children attending public school were obliged to go to Lyons, this village having the first district school. The law provided that district schools should be separated by at least three miles. The citizens of Lyons Village consented to permit the Village of Riverside to establish an independent school on condition that Riverside assist in building the new school in Lyons. The proposition carried by a small majority. In the fall of 1871, the first public school of Riverside was opened, in the east rooms of the second floor of the same building as the former private school. In the front room, Mr. Stevens conducted his small grammar grade classes, while in the rear room, Miss Mack had the primary department. Although the exact number of pupils is not known, old residents report about fifty. The directors were General Bates, president, and Mr. Watts DeGolyer. In the fall of 1872, Mr. Stevens was succeeded by Miss Diantha Shepherd. Her sister, Miss Mary Jane, came the following year to succeed Miss Mack. In 1874, a lot was purchased on Forest Avenue and a frame school house having two rooms, one on each floor, was opened.

Riverside

The cost was about \$7,000 with \$1,000 equipment. Mr. Downing followed Miss Shepherd as principal. Miss Parker had the lower school.

In April 1878, Mr. Charles L. Marsh, from the University of Vermont, and Mrs. Anna G. C. Davidson were employed. By this time several pupils were ready for High School. Mr. Marsh introduced a course in Latin, Algebra, English Literature, and Ancient History. In 1879, there were eighty-two pupils, two teachers, with but four distinct grades in the entire school. High School work was dropped in 1880 and Mr. Butler, Miss Allen of Ann Arbor University, and Julia Lattimore of Englewood, became the new faculty.

In 1882, a principal and two women teachers cared for the forty-four boys and forty-seven girls then enrolled and an addition to the building was not adequate for the rapid growth in attendance. At a mass meeting called by the directors, which met at the old C. B. & Q. Station, it was unanimously decided that bids should be received for a new building. One and forty-four hundredths acres were purchased, the present Central School site, for \$3,000. The first two stories were of red brick, the third story of wood, with a large belfry above. The cost was about \$22,500. School opened in the new structure in 1884.

Mr. Butler was succeeded by Miss L. G. Watson as principal.

Then, in the fall of 1888, Mr. Albert F. Ames, a graduate of the University of Toronto, came to Riverside as principal. Besides Mr. Ames there were four other teachers. Two eighth graders were graduated at the close of his first year.

Then and Now

A kindergarten was organized in 1890 with Miss Harriet Launder, a graduate of the Chicago Kindergarten College, as director. At two different times the kindergarten has been supported by private funds, for one year in earlier days, and for the years 1932 and 1933.

After the discontinuation of the High School in 1880, the boys and girls went to Lyons Township High School in La Grange. When Armour Institute was opened four years later, some of the young people, due to the interest of Mr. William J. Campbell, attended high school there. In June, 1895, a mass meeting was called to consider the important question of a High School and in the fall, a high school was opened in the Town Hall with Mr. Lane as principal. Mr. Ames assisted Mr. Lane in his work. Nineteen pupils took the first year course. The next year Mr. Lane was succeeded by Mr. Gore, who later became associate professor of Philosophy in the University of Chicago. A second year course and teacher, Miss Hemingway, were added. For the third year of High School, Miss May Butler was employed to teach the Sciences and German.

In the red brick building things were progressing nicely; the enrollment had grown so that in 1895 there were two hundred and five girls and one hundred and eighty-one boys in the first eight grades. On Thursday evening, September 3, 1896, a fire broke out, starting in the furnace room, and the building was completely destroyed. School was held in the Town Hall. Action was taken immediately to erect another building. The beauty of the present building is representative of the work of the famous architect, Mr. C. F. Whittlesey, who was employed at that time. The entry way to the building is a copy of that of the Transportation Building of

Riverside

the World's Fair. The middle and the east wing were erected at a cost of \$30,000. The plan contemplated a west tower and wing to be added when needed but it was not followed when additions were built. The assembly room was added later at a cost of \$1,250. The High School opened in the new building on September 20, 1897, and the grades on September 27, 1897.

In 1900 a special teacher of drawing was added to the staff. Military drill was inaugurated about this time and a supply of guns was provided through private subscription. In 1902 Manual Training was introduced. Physical Training was begun in 1904 with classes held twice a week. By 1907 Physical Education had been made compulsory for all children except upon the special request of a physician. Domestic Science was instituted in 1905.

The present Riverside-Brookfield High School was established in April, 1909. In that year, Proviso Township began to talk of forming a High School District which would include Riverside Township. Public spirited citizens forestalled this, at the suggestion of Mr. Ames, by forming Districts 95 and 96 into a High School District. Otherwise, our children would probably be going to Maywood today for their High School education. Until the erection of the present building on Ridgewood Avenue in 1918, the High School met in the Central School building.

Population increased rapidly, and in 1914 a primary wing was added to the Central School, also a boys' gymnasium. The first school nurse was employed in 1916. In 1919 the Community House at Hollywood was opened for kindergarten pupils and those of the first and second grades. Above the second grade the Hollywood children

Then and Now

came to the Central School until the opening of the new Hollywood building in 1929. This building now houses the third and fourth grades. In 1923, a school was built in the north part of town to take care of the kindergarden and the first five grades. It was named the A. F. Ames School. The growth in school population continued. In 1928, class rooms and a large gymnasium were added to the A. F. Ames School. In 1929, the Intermediate School was built to house the sixth, seventh and eighth grades.

During these forty-three years of expansion, Mr. Ames continued as superintendent, guiding the school at first made up of one hundred students and four teachers, until it had grown to one thousand two hundred thirty-nine pupils, exclusive of the High School, with a staff of fifty-one teachers from a four-roomed school with two grades in a room to four schools of many rooms. Under his supervision the schools attained excellent standing for character and high ideals of education.

In 1930, our present superintendent, Mr. L. J. Hauser, a graduate of the University of Minnesota, came to Riverside as assistant superintendent to Mr. Ames. He became superintendent of the Grammar Schools following the death of Mr. Ames in 1931, and still holds that position.

Our schools have benefited by many gifts. The school libraries were greatly increased and improved by liberal contributions from Mr. A. J. Seckel. The equipment for the gymnasium in the Central School was given as a memorial to George Alexander MacLean, by his mother, now Mrs. Robert I. Randolph.

The Central Parent-Teacher Association was organized in 1923. This was followed by the organization of

Riverside

the A. F. Ames Parent-Teacher Association December 8, and the Hollywood Parent-Teacher Association in 1925. These organizations have given much in time and energy for our schools as have other organizations of the village.

HISTORY OF RIVERSIDE GOLF CLUB

IN 1893 Mr. Wm. A. Havemeyer of Riverside gathered twenty-two of Riverside's men together and with them formed the Riverside Golf Club.

The charter members were: J. S. Andrews, Rev. Geo. E. Adams, Frank G. Badger, J. J. Bryant, Clarence S. Brown, C. H. Crosby, Geo. Chambers, J. S. Driver, Wm. A. Havemeyer, Geo. Hargreaves, Wm. A. Havemeyer Jr., Thos. C. Hannah, F. Hellyer, N. W. Mundy, T. T. Morford, D. W. McCord, A. MacArthur, D. Richardson, E. P. Ripley, Isham Randolph, Jerome Simpson, Robert Somerville and W. H. Ward.

During the first year of the Riverside Golf Club, the members played over a course they laid out northeast of the village and on village property, and in 1894 a committee composed of Robert Somerville, Thos. C. Hannah and J. S. Driver selected a site west of the Des Plaines river and about one mile and a half northwest of the village of Riverside and on this property in the same year, Messrs. W. A. Havemeyer, J. S. Driver and Thomas C. Hannah laid out a nine holes course, measuring 3,000 yards.

On this property they played without lease or rental until the club's incorporation on April 8, 1897.

The membership being small and not having much money in the treasury for the upkeep of the grounds it was decided to purchase a drove of sheep to assist in keeping the grass cropped short on the fairways.

In these days the majority of the people rode to the club on their bicycles and Mr. E. A. Driver was instru-

Riverside

mental in building a bicycle path from Riverside to the golf club, much of this path being through the woods.

When the Western Golf Association was organized, Mr. A. P. Bowen of the Riverside Golf Club was elected Vice-President.

In 1900 a new clubhouse was constructed. The building was half timber construction, two stories high and 136 feet long and 154 feet deep. A spacious veranda occupied the front and two sides of the clubhouse, the southeast end connecting with the dining room. The first floor contained reception, smoking and dining rooms, as well as a buffet, the men's and women's locker rooms and a complete equipped culinary department with cold storage.

The dining room was floored with hardwood and trimmed in oak and had a seating capacity of 80. The locker room contained 104 lockers; showers adjoining the locker room. The women's locker room contained 36 lockers. Bedrooms and bachelor quarters were on the second floor and the matron's room and servants' dormitory occupied the wing to the rear.

The price of constructing this building was approximately \$7,000.00. Robert Somerville, a thrifty Scotchman, was president of the club at that time.

This nine hole course laid out in 1894, and which skirted the Des Plaines River, being partially wooded and having creeks, swales and a ridge called the "Air Line," was amply provided with hazards and was considered one of the sportiest courses around Chicago.

The original nine holes course, with one or two minor changes remained as laid out until 1914, when the 85 acres comprising it was purchased and later additional property was bought east of the river, making in all about

Then and Now

115 acres, and in 1919 the well known golf architect, W. B. Langford, reconstructed the course, making it 18 holes. In the fall of 1918 the clubhouse was destroyed by fire and in 1919 the present clubhouse of brick construction was built on the east bank of the Des Plaines River.

RIVERSIDE HONOR ROLL

FOR WORLD WAR 1917-18

*

GOLD STAR

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WOUNDED

OVER SEAS

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Then and Now

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ERRATUM

On page 83, line 11, there is a statement that one of the water tower twins was used as a postoffice. The water tower twin was used as a telephone office.

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